Edited by-NORMAN WILSON Review Editor-FORSYTH HARDY London Correspondent -PAUL ROTHA Associate Correspondents— D. F. TAYLOR J. S. FAIRFAX-JONES U.S.A.— ERIC M. KNIGHT Hollywood-MACK W. SCHWAB France-ALEXANDER WERTH Holland-J. HULSKER Italy-P. M. PASINETTI Belgium-LUDO PATRIS Czechoslovakia-KAEL SANTAR Hungary-F. R. ORBAN India-R. K. RELE South Africa-H. R. VAN DER POEL Australia-LEON S. STONE Ireland-G. F. DALTON Japan-SHINKO MIZUNO And correspondents in Russia, Germany and Scandinavia.

SUBSCRIPTION—
Great Britain, 4s. 6d.
Abroad, 7s. 6d.
Post free for one year.

All business communications and subscriptions should be addressed to the Manager, G. D. ROBINSON

CINEMA QUARTERLY

CONTENTS

THE SPECTATOR. Norman Wilson
THE FUNCTION OF THE DIRECTOR. Berthold
Viertel
PRODUCTION METHODS IN SOVIET RUSSIA. Helen Schoeni
THE G.P.O. GETS SOUND. John Grierson . 215
STAGE PEOPLE AND FILM THINGS. C. R. Jones 222
RAMPANT REFORMERS. Eric M. Knight 227
FILMING IN CEYLON. Basil Wright 231
ACTIVITY IN BELGIUM. Ludo Patris 233
MISCELLANY. Mack W. Schwab, G. F. Dalton 237
FILMS OF THE QUARTER. Ralph Bond, Forsyth Hardy, Paul Rotha. D. F. Taylor
FILM SOCIETIES
THE INDEPENDENT FILM-MAKER. Films to
Music. G. R. Clark
Cover Design by E. McKNIGHT KAUFFER
Editorial and Publishing Offices:
24 N.W. THISTLE ST. LANE, EDINBURGH, 2
'Phone: 20425 Telegrams: Tricolour, Edinburgh
London Advertising Agents:
GREGORY & McCARTHY, 32 Shaftesbury Ave., W.1 'Phone: Gerrard 6456
DISTRIBUTORS ABROAD: New York, Gotham Book Mart, 51 W. 47th Street. Hollywood, Stanley Rose Book Shop, 1625 N. Vine Street. Paris, Au Pont de l'Europe, 17 rue Vignon. Melbourne, Leonardo Art Shop, 166 Little Collins Street: McGill's News Agency, 183 Elizabeth Street.

Modern Cinema Equipment

There are G.B.E. cinematograph equipments to meet every modern need

Standard Silent Projectors.

Standard Sound Projectors.

Standard Portable (35 mm.) Sound Projectors.

Sub-standard (16 mm.) Portable Sound Projectors.

Cinematograph Accessories
and

Public Address and School Hall
Amplification Systems
(All are British-Made)

Now in production: Films for Teachers made with Teachers, by G.B.I.



Full Information and Expert Advice

G.B. EQUIPMENTS, Ltd.

Sole Concessionaires for all British Acoustic Products

Film House, Wardour Street, London, W.I.

and Branches

Telephone: Gerrard 9292

THE SPECTATOR

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Sooner or later the finer significances of cinema art and purpose must be resolved and their true relationships established. Meanwhile all of us, critics and craftsmen alike, talk glibly of evolving technique without any clear idea of what we want to do with cinema, what we want to make it say once we know how. All the talk of film being still in its infancy is so much nonsense—a cowardly deceit to cover our wretched incompetence. Young in years the cinema may be, but it has already achieved ample maturity, with everything needful to produce the dreamed-of masterpieces. But where are they?

What excuse can we offer for their absence? The trade . . . the moguls of the box-office . . . the cost of production . . . censorship. Effete aesthetes may vent their imprecations in a wild hysteria, but they are as far from the truth as they are from practicalities. Nor need the producers blame the public, who may refuse but never demand. Reformers may rant and rave, but the masses, by and large, like their pleasures highly spiced. And when an august Governor of the British Film Institute believes it to be "not a bad thing" that the passions and emotions "thus find an outlet vicariously"—why should the trade worry?

The film industry lives up to its name, of which it has no reason to be either proud or ashamed. It exists to make money, as much as possible in the soonest possible time. It deceives nobody on this score, least of all itself. But while as a business proposition it may employ artists it has little concern with the production of art as a medium of expressions. Its use for art is to sell more and more miles of celluloid. And if it is not the art you want, says the trade, it sells our films and we pay plenty for it. Thus the principal object of censure casts the blame elsewhere.

And so the guilty game of pitch and toss goes on. Let us put an end to it forthwith. Let us be honest with ourselves and admit

the guilt. For it is we who are to blame. We—the craftsmen, the workers, the so-called artists, the creators of cinema. And we—the critics, the guiders, the moulders of taste. We between us must stand condemned, for not only are we getting nowhere—we have not yet made up our minds where we want to go. Other people may stand in our way and oppose, but the urge to progress must be within ourselves.

First of all we must make up our minds as to whether there can be any ultimate or even opportunate reconciliation between the dictates of art and the aims of commercialism. Can the film become a genuine collective art instead of a battle of divergent ideas and conflicting personalities? Or must the individual assert himself and by the power of his own creative impulse achieve an artistic unity out of elements which now oppose each other?

Is it the critic's function merely to surface comment on the meaningless confectionery of films which do no more than titilate

the senses? Or is he to expose the shams and attack the fundamental weaknesses of a medium which ought to be capable of moving

the mind and stirring the emotions of mankind?

How many films during the past year have attempted to say anything, laudable or otherwise? And how many films of thematic imbecility have been praised exhorbitantly for their superficial elegance? It may be no part of the critic's task to tell the artist what he ought to do, but as well as stimulating the appreciation and enlarging the comprehension of the spectator, the critic's evaluation, if a considered judgment of synthesis and comparison, can have a salutary effect on the sources of creation. Temperamental camera-work, counterpoint sound, dynamic cutting—all mean

nothing if what they say is not worth saying.

Under the present system of production, which hands out theme and scenario with little or no option, the director who wishes to retain his self-respect feels justified in repudiating all claims of an artist's responsibility in conception. Few, however, are prepared to surrender any part of the credit in a film's success. Yet, apart from Pabst, how many of the much lauded ace directors have had the courage to demand conditions of work which would allow them freedom of expression? If they were as big as their reputations they could command their own terms. But they are afraid. Not of the studio chiefs or their corporate employers—but of themselves. Given freedom of expression they would remain dumb or continue to turn out travesties like The Scarlet Empress. They have nothing to say. The vaunted directors, aping the stars in the magnitude of their self-esteem, are but clever virtuosos—the fiddlers who play the tune. Only there is no Beethoven, no Mozart, not even a Franz Lehar for them to interpret. What they have to

204

bring to life is the tattered corpse of an idea riven by the paltry minds of departmental heads and mangled at the hands of box-office accountants.

Cinema has not yet produced the creative artist who has something to say, can work out his theme, script it, direct it and edit it. Even Russia has found few of its esteemed directors able to evolve a theme or construct a scenario worthy of the technique for which they are justly famous. That is why Soviet writers have had to be called in to the cinema's aid. Elsewhere in these pages Berthold Viertel pleads eloquently for a similar move to be made in this country, and pending the emergence of the creative director proper, the removal of the scenario hacks from the studios would undoubtedly be a step in the right direction, and might allow a new spirit to permeate into production. But there are also many other obstacles which must be overcome if the commercial studios are to turn out satisfying entertainment, let alone art. Photography, sound, design, editing, each assume an importance in the eyes of their exponents disproportionate to their real significance in relation to the film as a whole. That these "comic barriers" can be broken down and each specialized worker made to serve in rational subservience to a controlling, creative intelligence, John Grierson has abundantly proved in the modest seclusion of Blackheath.

It is significant that men like Grierson, Flaherty, Rotha, have chosen documentary in preference to studio work. Because it is produced under saner and freer conditions and is generally the conception of a single mind, documentary is the one species of film which achieves a unity approaching artistic satisfaction. In this respect it is to be regretted that Man of Aran is not the successor to Tabu and Nanook of the North that had been anticipated, for it represents an important experiment on the part of a commercial company in financing an independent film-maker to produce a picture according to his own ideas. In sponsoring Flaherty, Gaumont British created a precedent which it is hoped will be a forerunner of an established policy, for only the success of the commercially sponsored, independently produced reality film will ever induce the industry to consider introducing a similar system in the studios. Memories of Eisenstein and Stroheim, and a knowledge of their present personnel, may make America nervous of further experiment, but producers in this country, not yet hide-bound by tradition, must be persuaded to give the artist who has something to say full freedom of expression.

Not till then can cinema take its destined place in the forefront

of the arts.

NORMAN WILSON.

THE FUNCTION OF THE DIRECTOR

2. THE STUDIO DIRECTOR

BERTHOLD VIERTEL

LAYMEN with no insight into picture making do not know what a director does. I do not think it bad that they should not know, for when the performance is so perfect that the director is not noticed he may well be pleased with himself. But one is so often asked about it. Audiences get an impression, sometimes an overwhelming one, of the importance of a conductor, because they see him with their own eyes directing the orchestra. This impression is stamped on their minds, although the conductor's actions may be no more than a show. The more effective the show the greater their personal conviction of his importance. They do not realize that the difference between a Toscanini and a Furtwangler is a result of painstaking rehearsals.

At the theatre, the audience is left more in the dark. It is rather embarrassing to see a gentleman in a dress suit appear after the performance; people, if they are not hardened first nighters, whisper to each other: "Who is this man? Is he the author? What is he?" Actually, on the legitimate stage, the importance of the director varies tremendously. Between the technician who regulates the machinery and the interpreter who penetrates the work of a genius, recreating it in flesh and blood, or the man who changes the play during rehearsals, there are many degrees. But fundamentally, no matter who is directing, the situation on the legitimate stage is this: before the first rehearsal starts, the director is usually given a complete play; between these printed words and the personality of an actor which develops during a situation on the stage, between these two existing elements there is still an immense space for creation.

What a director creates lies not only in the atmosphere of the whole, in the bringing together of all individuals until they are shaped into one family, until they have the structure of one world: he not only creates what we may call the style of the whole performance which is expressed in every detail down to the smallest point, not only composes the action and translates the vision which he got from the work into pictorial reality, as costumes, sets and the like: but is called upon to cope with the thousand little problems which are continually cropping up, each one with a thousand different solutions. The stage, like life itself, is overflowing with

immediate needs for immediate decisions. No matter how much each helper and each personality connected with the work spends his own gifts, the centre of all this little world is dependent on the sensitivity, the mind and the judgment of the one man who not only represents the writer and actors, but who is also the first audience; who, by sitting in front of the stage and watching from without what happens thereon, is able to jump in at any moment and keep good things alive, cut off a wrong movement, increase the general enthusiasm and make everyone work strictly to the great purpose. It is an obvious paradox that a fool who sits before the stage may be wiser than a genius acting on it who, by being a part of the play, becomes an object over which he loses command. What makes the real director is an imagination which unites these various elements, these countless kaleidoscopic details into one complete whole. No matter whether it be by love or by strictness, harsh words or soft, the real director's spirit must, above all things, encourage. He must give impulses and respond to impulses, he must be at once active and passive. A man may be an excellent critic, have a great analytical mind, know everything about a play, about acting and the stage, and not be an able director because he misses the positiveness which keeps things going. A very simple man, not at all highly educated, may have much more warmth and life to spend, may be endowed to a far greater extent by that all-important gift, a combining instinct.

In the cinema, between the director and the completed film, there is a vast and complicated machinery. First he has to translate everything he sees into photography which changes something seen with natural eyesight into something new and different. This technical means of transferring the things you see in nature on to a twodimensional screen is further complicated, now that pictures talk, by the machinery of sound. A second mechanical world has sprung to life, completing the whole technique and opening up endless possibilities which have yet to be explored. Apart from the necessity of dealing with these technical contrivances and using them as a means of creation, a director must be able to divide his future picture from the start into little particles of a kaleidoscope, create them separately one after the other, always bearing in mind the final unity. This also concerns the actor; he is never in a position to follow at will the flux of an action, but is forced to do particles of a scene jerked out of continuity. In order that the actor may give as much of himself as on the legitimate stage, he is put at the mercy of the director who alone has the whole film continuously in his mind and must control every mood, every detail which, thrown apart as

they are, must ultimately fit together.

But these special conditions of filming originate in the script, which has already been built up as a kind of architecture of technical details which no writer could really imagine and which are definitely left to the mind of the man who has to produce them on the floor. Thus the activity of the film director starts as soon as an idea is ready to be developed into a moving picture. Only a few writers with special directorial gifts have developed the faculty to think in

moving picture continuity.

Usually the process starts in this way; a subject is chosen and is talked over, not in continuity, but analytically, as a lawyer discusses a case with his client. It is a general handling of ideas which belong to the picture, whence develops a unity of action which is built up into scenes and made to flow smoothly in a continuous direction. Every picture is a machine which has to be built consistently, each shot must be linked indissolubly to the next. When at last a continuous scenario is developed the scenes are broken down into shots. If this final shooting script is the work of another mind, it is impossible for any creative director to adhere to it, however completely it may have been worked out. In practice, on the floor, he

will so often be forced to change the viewpoint.

To augment these difficulties pictures are produced by an industry. This industry is very unlike the legitimate stage: it does not wait for writers to come to its doors, who have something to express, who want to deliver a message of their hearts, of their minds, which they have developed during sleepless nights. The legitimate stage lives on the messages of people who have carried their subjects in their hearts, maturing them perhaps throughout many years. The moving picture industry gives orders. The moving picture industry collects subjects and makes writers work on them, within a rigid time limit. There is little space left for organic growth from within, the work must be done rather under the conditions of enforced labour, and all progress is watched and supervised by special experts. The industry is in a growing process of mechanization and division of labour. For every part of the picture a department is responsible. This department is not concerned with a single picture like a writer who sits meditating in his room. America, as the most industrial country of the world, as the country of mechanization and rationalization of labour, goes on mechanizing picture work. No longer is the director supposed to cut his own picture, although the process of cutting which I have not yet mentioned is the final completion of the film, a last sifting, an ultimate creation of the material. An enormously complicated system of departments, split into a multitude of human beings, reaches without interruption into the creative process, each in its own field destroying every unity of mood,

putting grave obstacles against the singleminded conception of one man. To anyone who watches the process, it seems almost impossible for one man to hold all these elements together with unity as an aim and still, at the end, to have produced a work intact and

single in purpose.

This is why original messages so seldom reach the screen. The American industry is enormously efficient at producing highfrequency film machines. It is at its best when using robust themes in those matter-of-fact stories on which it pours sentimentality as a pastry cook pours icing on a cake. This sounds rather an annihilating verdict. Nevertheless I admire the vitality of quite a few of these pictures, which contain, apart from striking detail, a victorious wittiness, and are, so many of them, technically perfect. As the aim of the picture industry is the entertainment of masses, this aim can be reached by mechanized methods. But one should not forget that pictures have not only to entertain the masses, but must give them their mental daily bread. These two different aims must be approached by two different methods. The one, a strict use of mechanization, the other, a humanization of mechanics. Among the hundreds of pictures produced in a year in America, only eight or ten break through with an original message. But these eight or ten pictures are undoubtedly international masterpieces which advance film making throughout the world. Directors who are able to deliver these messages at the end, after all those instances of obstruction, until the assembly of distributors who so often decide the ultimate fate of pictures, have to be built like heavyweight champions. But they must be heavyweight champions who have not lost their tenderness of heart or their distinctiveness of vision. Even on the legitimate stage a lot of practical work has to be done in order to bring poetry to life. In pictures the practical work becomes the task of a giant.

Things are in this respect a good deal easier in Britain. The British industry, growing up and developing visibly from day to day, is, of course, following the American methods, but as yet more gently, while Europe to a certain extent puts up a resistence to mass production, still preferring home-made goods. Although it is technically more difficult, and the organization is not so highly developed, it is easier to deliver a personal message here. What I would like to fight for is that this chance should be used to a greater extent, that more and more pictures should be done which have something to say

before they try to say it.

That is at bottom the question of the script. Being passionately both a writer and a director and believing in pictures as a creative means, I insist that I would very much like to improve the position of the kind of writer who writes for films, not only because they pay him more money but because they give him a means of expression. To find these people, to encourage them, to introduce them to film technique, is my ambition. There is an urgent need for film writers who can develop as did our best dramatists. There I believe lies the vital source of film improvement and the future of the talking picture which till now has taken no more than the first few steps to conquer its enormous possibilities.

PRODUCTION METHODS IN SOVIET RUSSIA

HELEN SCHOENI

THE film industry in Soviet Russia is a child of the revolution. It came into being during the stormy years of the new regime and has developed into one of the chief purveyors of propaganda. Lenin saw in the new-born art a graphic means of educating the vast hordes of illiterate peasants in the ways of Marxian dialectic. With its raison d'être defined for it at the outset, all that remained for the industry was to develop along the lines which would make it a compelling force in the education of the workers and widespread in its influence.

Since it drew its first breath in a land where the first person singular possessive pronoun was anathema, and all industries were under the government ægis, the issues of competition, money making and personality plus were a priori impossibilities. It is not surprising then that the film industry is organised under a central kino bureau, which is virtually a minor commissariat, called the State Cine Photo Department, or GUKF. This amalgamation and centralization of all the branches of production, distribution, and exhibition, is for the purpose of attaining efficiency, a close censorship and control of policy by the government, and the concentration and arrangement of output necessary to place films within the reach of the largest number of consumers.

The policy of film production in the Soviet Union, as defined by GUKF, is to establish a cheap cinema for all, that would serve all, and in doing this keep alive the desire for liberation, and to encourage

co-operation in the task of defending and rebuilding Russia. In the accomplishment of this task their aim is to manufacture raw film stock and, so far as possible, keep it "all Russian," to increase home industry and decrease unemployment. The present Russian raw film is vastly inferior to the European import of panchromatic stock which was used in many of their past films. This temporary handicap will be overcome in due time, but it is a serious drawback to the

industry at present. The general subject matter for film treatment has, of necessity, been dictated by the revolution and the dicta of the Five Year Plans. All scenarios must pass the censorship board of the central committee of GUKF. In this way all counter-revolutionary material or "bourgeois" outlooks can be nipped in the bud. A "plan" can be carried out and a balanced diet of films can be governed at the outset. No tidal waves of gangster films or costume plays sweep over the Soviet movie-going public as they do elsewhere. Accompanying each scenario submitted to GUFK must be a questionnaire which gives the name of the scenario; the author; which studio is apt to produce it; what it is likely to cost; when it will be released for showing; from what sort of material the scenario is drawn (Eisenstein in submitting his scenario October to Gukf wrote in answer to this question: "Revolutionary Utopia"); and lastly, what the characteristics of the scenario are. Referring again to October, Eisenstein wrote: "It films the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. The scenario groups around the period from the February to the October Revolutions. It is made from historic material. The scenario is calculated

The scenarios chosen for production by Gukf are assigned to the different studios throughout Russia if arrangements have not already been made by a studio to film a certain script. Many of the scenarios in the past have been the work of directors in the employ of a studio. In such cases the script is returned to its author for production.

to appeal to a wide worker and peasant audience."

The Soviet film studios, called Kino factories, are built on a much more modest scale than the Hollywood or European film plants. However, the new Sovkino plant in the Sparrow Hills, on the outskirts of Moscow, boasts of possessing the largest sound studio in the world as well as a huge tank for the filming of acquatic scenes. Here under one roof will be the large sound stage, two smaller sound-proofed studios, offices for directors and technicians, a laboratory for the development of films and a small pre-view room, a restaurant, make-up rooms, storehouses, workshops, etc., all connected so that studio workers need not bundle up in going from one place to another during the severe winters.

The more modest Mejrabpom Studio, in the heart of Moscow, can boast of having in its employ such directors of note as Ozep, Kules-

hov, Protosanov, Alexandrov and Bela Belacz. Cramped for space and handicapped by insufficient technical devices they have managed to produce many of the most outstanding films to come out of Russia. It is here that Kuleshov recently made *The Great Consoler*, a film based on Upton Sinclair's biography of O. Henry's two years

in prison.

Each studio works on what is known as a one year plan of production. Of the scripts assigned to them by Gukf scarcely more than fifty per cent. are filmed in the allotted time. Being under no compulsion of competing in a saturated market, and labouring under no long-term contracts with high salaried "stars," the studios work with a leisureliness that would make an American producer fancy himself on holiday. The average time spent on a film ranges from eight months to a year. Many of the epic films of the past have extended over two and three years. This seeming geologic sense of time is partly explained by the fact that all work on location must be done during the summer months as the severity of the winter, coupled with the rainy fall, makes outdoor work an impossibility for the greater proportion of the year. With the advent of sound films and a growing tendency away from "films of the land" more work is being done in the studios and a larger output is resulting.

From the scripts submitted to a studio a director is free to choose the one he wishes to work on. Here there is none of the capitalistic system of assigning a director to a script which he often feels is an insult to his intelligence and taste. Directors work on a monthly salary basis. The wage scale is flexible and varies with the fame and talent of the director. Salaries range from 400 to 1,200 roubles a month. Eisenstein receives a monthly salary of 1,200 roubles, while his former assistant, Alexandrov, received 800. If the director is also the author of the scenario he receives the outright sale price for the script as well as a percentage of the box-office intake at each showing of the film in all movie houses. The amount paid for a script again varies according to the fame of its author and its significance as a theme and the excellence of its treatment. The amounts paid for long feature films range from 1,000 to 10,000 roubles. Eisenstein is reported to have sold his recent scenario, M.M.M., for 30,000 roubles. All box-office intake nets the director one per cent while

the author receives one and a half per cent of the totals.

Once the director has chosen his scenario he is free to choose his camera-man, technicians and assistants from the regular staff of studio employees. He is likewise given carte blanche in casting. The sole restriction placed upon him is in the matter of the cost of the production. Once the estimated cost has been approved by GUKF he is bound to remain within this budget. An administrator or financial manager is assigned to him by the studio head and he works

with the director to keep within the bounds of reason and handles all the money outlays. The cost of making films range from 500,000 roubles to a million.

Each studio maintains a staff of "second line" actors on their pay-roll. It is understood that a director will use these actors where-ever it is possible but he is never compelled to utilize them at the cost of obvious miscasting, as is often the case in Hollywood. He is free to get his actors from whatever source he chooses. Because of the leisurely pace at which the studios work, high salaried actors are seldom found in the studio but are engaged from the legitimate theatres when needed. Moskvin and Bataloff, both of the Moscow Art Theatre, are two outstanding artists who have been called in to create notable rôles in films of the past. Actors invited to work on a film are given contracts for a single film. They are paid on the monthly salary basis. They aggregate as much as 30,000 roubles on a picture thus made.

The "second line" or supporting feature players, as we call them, receive a monthly salary ranging from 300 to 600 roubles. When a special type is needed which the studio is not able to supply from their staff of actors a director is free to go out into the highways and byways to find him. A "real" peasant, a burly prizefighter type of workman or a former aristocrat, in need of extra money, are able in this way to earn fifteen roubles a day. In the case of mob scenes, such as those which figured so prominently in Eisenstein's Battleship Potemkin, the people are regimented to give their services free as one

of their contributions to the state.

Once a film is shot the director spends the ensuing weeks or months in the editing and cutting of his film. One need not go into a discussion here of the principles of montage and creative editing which have grown out of the Russian system. To the readers of Cinema Quarterly the ingenuity and artistic results gained by this post-shooting study of filmic material is an old story. It remains only to be said that all Russian film directors edit their own film. Many of them look upon this period as their most creative contribution to the film's total effect.

The Soviet film is the work of one man, and his assistants who are fulfilling his plans. To have seventeen people mull over a scenario, whipping it into shape, filling it full of "sure-fire gags" and clichés is unthinkable in the Soviet film industry. If a film is a hodge-podge and misses fire the blame can rightfully be laid at the door of the director.

Once the film has been pre-viewed and released from the studio it is sent to the central distribution bureau, quaintly called by the Russians the "Let Out On Hire Bureau." From this bureau the exhibitor can choose what films he will show to his patrons. There is no problem of high-pressure advertising to outsell one's competitor in a glutted market. There is no question of accepting insultingly inferior films in order to gain one good product in a "block" of films

produced by a studio.

The only advertising carried on is done in the newspapers, on the kiosks and modest billboards distributed at focal points throughout the city, or by displays outside the theatre where the picture is showing. The marque carries the name of the film rather than our familiar "star." On the programme the names of the director, musician, cameraman and actors all get equal emphasis. This type of advertisement, or more properly announcement, is indicative of the Communist attitude toward theatre-going. Some are intrigued by the title of the film, others by the scenarist's fame, others go because they have attached a director's name with a certain quality, others go to see a favourite actor create a new rôle. Whatever the reasons may be, the fact remains the theatres are always crowded.

There are no continuous showings in Russia. A film is run through for one audience. The house is emptied, aired and then a new group comes in to see it. "Chasers" are an unknown phenomenon in the Soviet kino. While a gathering audience awaits the opening of the doors into the main auditorium they are entertained in the foyer. The programmes vary from a symphony concert to chamber music, a popular soloist or a dancer performing, as the people sit or stroll quietly about or drink tea in the nearby café.

With a growing leniency in the subject matter of the more recent films, which include a greater number possessing a universal appeal, it is not too much to predict that the Soviet studios will become dangerous rivals to other producing countries. It is conceivable that there will be an exodus of our writers, directors and actors to where originality, artistic integrity and freedom for creative work maintain.

FILMS AND MUSIC

A CHAPTER in Constant Lambert's lively, lucid and witty study of modern music, "Music Ho!" (London: Faber. 10s. 6d.) is devoted to mechanical music and the cinema and for once we have a serious and sympathetic examination of music in films by a composer. In spite of its ephemeral nature, he considers that the film is the only art whose progress is not at the moment depressing to watch. Films, he thinks, "have the emotional impact for the twentieth century that operas had the nineteenth. Pudovkin and Eisenstein are the true successors of Mussorgsky, D. W. Griffiths is our Puccini, Cecil B. de Mille our Meyerbeer, and René Clair our Offenbach." Though he mis-spells Al Jolson's name, Lambert shows in his other references that he knows well the films he is writing about and his experience is that "the film is the most vigorous art form of to-day."

214

THE G.P.O. GETS SOUND

JOHN GRIERSON

I shall not, in this, attempt a theory of sound but merely record the sudden possession of sound apparatus. The plaintive miracle of this event, the learned but sometimes too hopeful followers of cinema might note. Whatever one's theories, access to the means of production is not easy for art. The apparatus costs three thousand pounds or thereabouts; the re-recording apparatus is a luxury over and above that. This is the machine which orchestrates the different elements of sound—the natural sounds, the music, the dialogue—and, in effect, makes a considered sound strip possible. Add to these purely engineering costs the cost of your sound cameramen; add the cost of orchestras at two guineas per instrument per session of four hours; add the cost of a created music. Access to the means of production is clearly not a simple matter. That we have found an economic basis for it in government propaganda and, with it, have retained the same freedom for directors we enjoyed with the E.M.B., represents a relief and thankfulness I leave to the imagination.

We waited five years for sound at the E.M.B. We saw our first film fall in the gulf between silence and sound, and our subsequent films pile up in silence on a fading market. Our solitary access to sound last year was bound to be a disappointing one, for, selling some films to G-B., we were reduced to attendant orchestra and attendant commentator. Under such conditions responsibility passed out of our hands and experiment was plainly impossible. The result—in *Industrial Britain*, O'er Hill and Dale, Up Stream and the others—was, I suppose, competent. From any considered point of view it represented no contribution whatever to the art and practice of sound.

By access to sound, I mean an intimate relation between the producer and his instruments. I mean a relationship as direct as we have established for him in the matter of camerawork. He is his own first cameraman and the silly mystery with which professional cameramen once surrounded their very simple box of tricks, is over and done with. With us, the producer is his own sound man too, and in the same simple sense. In the studio the old camera nonsense has

become attendant on the apparatus of sound. Mysterious bells are rung, and rung as for some great religious ceremony. High priests gabble in the same essential idiom as Thibetan priests over their prayer wheel, and a dozen perfectly unnecessary, or perfectly unimportant hangers-on, create atmosphere in the background. To convince so many important young men that so far as production is concerned they are only a bunch of chauffeurs who should be driving the car where you want it to go, is obviously too difficult for a mere documentary director. And it is probably not worth his trouble. Other phalanxes of experts lie beyond: knowing exactly—on one showing of your film and a couple of rehearsals—what music you want. And with studio overheads—the hangers-on nursing their overtime as religiously as their machines—any varia-

tion from the routine job is too expensive anyway.

By access to sound I mean the absolute elimination of these comic barriers between the producer and the result he wants. I mean the elimination of both economic and ideologic overheads. At the G.P.O. we have established it from the beginning. We have one sound engineer, and a good one. For the rest, if we want music—and we do not want it much—we find it cheaper to have it written for us. If we want natural sound, the producer drives out and gets it. If we want to orchestrate sound we sit in the sound van and arrange the re-recording as we think best. If we want to play with sound images, or arrange choral effects, or in any way experiment, we have no one's permission to ask and no considerable overheads to worry about, because we do most of the work ourselves. We are even free, as on one occasion recently, to make our own orchestra. The instruments and players were as follows. One rewinder (Legg), one trumpet, two typewriters (office staff), one empty beer bottle (blown for a ship's siren), one projector (by the projectionist), some conversation, two pieces of sand paper (Elton), the studio silence bell (myself), cymbals and triangle (Wright). Walter Leigh arranged and conducted. The result was our title music for 6.30 Collection. It cost us the hire of the trumpet.

Indeed it is remarkable that our experiments have all made for cheaper sound. It costs five pounds, I believe, to have a professional commentator, but we have never thought of spending so much on so little. We do the job ourselves if we want a commentary, and save both the five pounds and the quite unendurable detachment of the professional accent. Better still, if we are showing workmen at work, we get the workmen on the job to do their own commentary, with idiom and accent complete. It makes for intimacy and authenticity, and nothing we could do would be half so good. You will see the result in both Cable Ship and

Under the City. In 6.30 Collection — a highly symphonic account of the Western District Sorting Office in London—Legg carried the connective commentary. Natural noises and some odd conversational scraps picked up by the microphone, told the rest of the story. No music was used in this film. In Under the City, we had music written for the beginning and the end and for a very beautiful slow motion sequence of an opening cable. In Cable Ship we borrowed some Mendelssohn to take a ship sentimentally to sea. The continuous undercurrent of music we have renounced. It was expensive, and none of us knew what it was there for anyway. We leave it to

the less businesslike commercials.

These represent first variations and possibly not very important ones. 6.30 Collection however, is probably the first documentary made entirely with authentic sound. It was not of course, a case of taking our sound anyhow. The noises of the sorting office were to some extent orchestrated. The racket of the interior grew with the increasing traffic. It swelled, it had lulls. It was broken by the repeated call of the bagmen coming to empty more letters on the facing tables, by the staccato machine-gun beat of the stampcancelling machines, by the careful introduction of oddments of conversation on allotments and this and that, by the choral effort of the dispatch men calling the destination of their bags across half the world, by a beautiful scrap of whistling. When the rush was over and the litter was swept from the deserted and now silent tables, we synchronized the swish of the brushes and crossed the sound of a starting train. And on the train and the ship and the aeroplane which followed, we crossed the chorus of destinations across half the world, repeated in its authentic monotone.

I do not pretend these are other than beginnings in the use of sound, but I feel they are right beginnings. I noticed when we showed the film at the Phoenix in London, that the natural noises and the overheard comments, orders, calls and conversations, created a new and curious relationship between the audience and the screen. The distance was broken down in a certain intimate delight—I presume—at seeing strangers so near. Eavesdropping, who knows, may yet be one of the pillars of our art. There was one superb sequence that we could not use. A dispatchman, edging unwittingly up to the microphone, loosed his more private opinion of some new and officious supervisor. The vocabulary was

limited, but the variations were ingenious.

What we shall call the crossing of sound, to save the more difficult mention of asynchronism, is obviously a first consideration even in such simple experiments. There was a dilemma in the making of Cable Ship, for we began and ended on the same trucking shot of the International Telephone Exchange, to which our cable

story related. As the first shot passed from one foreign switchboard to another, it was synchronized with telephone patter in the different languages involved. But to repeat this at the end would, we felt, be very ordinary, for the cable story had added other, less obvious, sounds to the patter of languages. Behind them were cable ships searching for faults, grappling for cables, mending them. The second time, we synchronized with the sound of a navigation order on the bridge of a ship, the order repeated, the ship's telegraph rung. Someone has just told me that he heard thirty years ago a discourse on flight, in which the lecturer maintained that the secret of bird flight lay not in the feathers, but in the air-spaces between the feathers. This I think, will serve very well for a working definition of the art of sound. The spaces between are the incidental sounds

which, in a species of imagery, give perspective.

In our B.B.C. film and Savings Bank film, there will be, I hope, more mature developments. At one point in 6.30 Collection, we thought of introducing the voices of the letters as they passed along the conveyor belt. We bought, in Woolworth's, a sixpenny book on "letter writing for all occasions," and had a mind to build up a rigmarole of excerpts from business letters, love letters, coy letters, angry letters, desperate letters, vain letters; but the trick was finally reserved. In the Savings Bank film, we shall probably put it into effect, and for better reason. The Savings Bank is probably the finest example of mechanized clerking in the country. It is a wilderness of filing systems and of machines which add up your deposits and calculate your interest. If I remember rightly, they even go to the trouble of checking up their calculations and confessing any wrong they have done you. The visuals plainly did less than justice to the reality which was there, tucked away in a myriad numbered slips: representing so many human cares and fears and hopes and responsibilites. Detaching them from the regimented mass, it is easy to see how resolutions are made every new year, are broken, are taken up again: how no description of the citizen's year can be half so true or half so intimate as the rise and fall of the millions at the Savings Banks. Something of this we shall try to tell, for over the mechanical visuals we propose to put a chorus indicating—it may be in short snatches of confession, or in plain objective record, or in vers libres—the human reference behind the slips of the filing cabinets.

Once, in Paris, before the coming of sound, I heard an *émigré* choir sing a background for *The Village of Sin*. They sang a harvest song for a brilliant harvest scene, and brought the audience to its feet. Walter Creighton recorded a similar chorus for his Canadian harvest scene in *One Family*, but made the mistake of associating "We Plough the Fields and Scatter" with the manipulators of



Net-caster of Duwa, Negombo. From Basil Wright's documentary of Ceylon. Sychronisation will be done with the aid of natives who have been brought to London specially for the purpose.







Three Heads:
Granite Buddha, Kandyan
Dancer, Devil Dancer. From
Basil Wright's documentary
of Ceylon.

the Winnipeg Wheat Pit. Chorus does not stop there. In Three Cornered Moon, you remember, snatches of conversation, held together, made a choral accompaniment for an unemployment sequence. People spoke in truncated desolation. In Beast of the City the monotonous sound of police calls on the wireless swept across the crime of a community. What development there might be if the often beautiful formulae of sound and word which occur in life were to be given dramatic value! I hold myself a house lease in eighteenth century English in which I swear by the Blessed Trinity, and an insurance contract with Lloyds is the most attractive hunk of English in commercial use to-day; a repetition of Lloyds list with its lovely ships' names and strange ports of sailing would make a splendid attendant sound on the commerce of the world.

And why not, at last, use the poet? The vers librists were made for cinema. The monologues of Joyce, covering as they do the subjective aspects of human action, are as important for the sound film as the dialogue of the dramatist. The masked changes in O'Neill between the word spoken and the word thought represent the simplest properties of any considered sound film. Eisenstein has possibly put the monologue too high in his account, by isolating it from chorus. It is only one species of choral effect, limited somewhat to personal story. The larger possibilities lie beyond monologue, I believe, in the poetry which, in the case of streets, say, will arrange some essential story in the mumble of windows, pub counters and passers-by. Our B.B.C. film will make some effort in the complementary direction. We try there to make our childrens' talk (a reading from Kingsley's "Heroes") cross-section an afternoon. We play Beethoven to cross-section a London night in one mood, and jazz to cross-section it in another mood. a psalm across starting machines, and a Shakespeare sonnet, with instructions to shipping mixed, across the coming of night.

SECRETS OF NATURE

Disney's work apart, no other short films have so high an international reputation as the Secrets of Nature. Inaugurated in 1922 the series now includes over 150 films which may have made certain concessions to box-office regretted by the purists, but we must be grateful to a commercial enterprise which did not give us in their stead the wise-cracking imbecilities of many American "scientific shorts." In "Secrets of Nature" (London: Faber. 12s. 6d.) the story of the films is told by Mary Field and Percy Smith. The former writes of filming bird life and of zoo films and adds an explanatory chapter on editing and sound; and the latter occupies the major portion of the book with a valuable description of filming insect and plant life. An essentially modest account does not hide from us the fact that it has been Smith's films which have brought chief distinction to the series.

STAGE PEOPLE AND FILM THINGS

C. R. JONES

THE HISTORY of the film as an art is that of its struggle against theatricality. In the 'twenties of this century it seemed that this struggle had been at last successful. But the arrival of the sound film and the consequent disorganisation threw the cinema back into the subservience to theatrical ideas from which it had only recently

escaped.

The struggle was renewed and has met with a considerable measure of success. If we compare (say) Morning Glory and The Last of Mrs. Cheyney (1928) we notice a number of important advances in technique. The photographer has left the stalls; the scenarist has emerged from the prompt-box; the director has a firmer hold on the production now that he is no longer confined to the wings. In fact, photographed plays get fewer and fewer each year, and real films are seen more and more often.

But we have to admit that these films, though often well made, are seldom worth making. Even in those like *Power and Glory*, on which a certain amount of thought has been expended, we can find only a painfully poor return. For the studios, though free from theatrical technique, still concern themselves almost exclusively with theatrical subject-matter. But, if the cinema is ever to become anything more than a starring vehicle, if ever it is going to develop a dramatic art of its own, it must realize the limits of its field of work. These limits are determined by the nature of its technical equipment.

Both the film and the stage are almost entirely concerned with Personal Drama—the presentation and solution of a conflict between a few individuals. It depends for its success on the extent to which it enables the spectator to neglect his knowledge that it is a fiction and temporarily to identify himself with its protagonists. The dramatist must, therefore, make vividness of presentation his first object and avoid everything (including verisimilitude) which will exhaust his audience's interest or distract their attention from the essentials of the conflict. With this in mind he proceeds to the choice of medium. If he should pick the film he is confronted at the outset by a great difficulty. He must convince the audience of the force of his characters' personality—otherwise his drama will become a battle of shadows. In the theatre he brings before them a flesh and blood actor—a man trained in the use of personal

999

magnetism. But in the cinema all he has is a shadow on a screen, which has no attraction at all apart from that which he gives it.

In the early days of the cinema this difficulty was insuperable. Films had no characters, only types—the Hero, the Villain, the Funny Man. But when D. W. Griffith discovered the use of the close-up the creation of character became possible. The camera can now take us so close to the film-actor that his slightest expression becomes significant. Thus, though the dramatist must dispense with the assistance of personal attraction, he can use by way of compensation a close concentration on significant detail which is impossible in a theatre. He can create character as well in a film as in a play.

But drama is something more than creation of character (which is "starring"). It is the opposition of characters and its reasoned solution. The dramatist brings two characters on to the stage, each of whom can claim his share of the audience's attention without encroaching on that necessary to his antagonist. But if the dramatist wishes to bring another character into a film the procedure is less simple. He must either withdraw the camera until it is able to take in both, or else pan from one to the other. If he should do the former he loses the concentration the close-up gave and presents his audience with the photograph of a play; while another close-up would obliterate in the mind of the audience the impression of the first which it is absolutely essential should be maintained; moreover a film composed entirely of close-ups would be first tiring and ultimately ineffective.

This is an obvious simplification of what occurs in actual practice. Cameramen are so competent that they almost convince us that their wanderings have a purpose—certainly they make us forget that all they are doing is dithering between the middle distance and the close-up, in a perpetual uncertainty whether to

settle in the stalls or at the microscope.

But, however cleverly it may be concealed, the dilemma is none the less real; it cleaves in two any attempt to film Personal Drama. Either the Persons obliterate the Drama, or the Drama conceals the Persons. The part is made to equal the whole, which is absurd.

I do not mean to say that all Personal films are wholly worthless. There have, on the contrary, been innumerable excellent studies of individual personalities. That is the star system; and at its best, when Pabst is directing Brigette Helm, Wesley Ruggles Mae West, or Stroheim himself, it produces exciting results. But the excitement is really born of anticipation. "When this interesting person really gets going," we think, "what a grand film it will be." But they never do. By the time they have been created the film is over and we are left with something that is not quite a case-history and not quite a work of art. Neither flesh nor fowl, it is only a good

red herring distracting attention from better lines of work.

The majority of films are star films, in which the drama is sacrificed to the principal character. The few in which the director concentrates on his plot can be equally exciting but (except for light comedy like The Guardsman or farces like the work of Tom Walls) they are equally unsatisfactory. The gyrations of puppets can never be more than a pastime for a wet afternoon. But more ambitious attempts to hold the balance between character and plot (such as Mamoulian's Song of Songs) are seldom even that. Personalities and relationships are dangled before our eyes just long enough to be enticing but not sufficiently long to be understood. We are first tantalized, then bewildered, and finally bored.

Up to this point I should have the cordial agreement of the theatricals. St. John Ervine, for instance, devotes two columns about once a month to demonstrating that the cinema can never encroach on the province of the stage—Personal Drama. But when he goes on to conclude that the cinema can never produce any drama at all we part company. For this is the purest nonsense, based on a ridiculously limited view of the nature of drama. Professional critics are often unable to distinguish the wood and the trees. But to conclude that there is no wood because an artist is barking up the wrong tree seems to me a deplorable example of mental myopia.

This blindness is all the more surprising because the elements of the other kind of drama are more obvious now than ever before. Every man is all his life a protagonist in two great conflicts—he has to maintain his claim to consideration from his fellows, to establish a satisfactory relationship with People; and he has to earn his livelihood and fulfil his duties as a member of civilized society, to assert his supremacy over Things. It is this second conflict—the drama of Men and Things—that is of such peculiar interest to us to-day. After centuries of effort we have overcome the opposition of natural forces and enabled ourselves to produce an abundance of material goods. Yet the machines which provide the means of life are depriving millions of men of the opportunity of earning a livelihood. Primitive tribes have evolved into the highly complex organisms of modern national states, and they seem bent on using their unprecedented powers chiefly in preparations for mutual destruction. It is incredible that anybody should ignore these two tragic paradoxes and all their innumerable effects. They form a background for many novels and poetry, they disturb the contemplation of the painter, they are even crowded on to the stage. Only the cinema has not heard of them, and continues to exist in a world of its own where material conditions, the controlling forces of many people's lives, have no appreciable effect on the conduct of the inhabitants.

roin

he sh



rom "Edinburgh," directed by Marion Grierson for the Travel Association.

he shot is taken from the Calton Hill looking towards the Castle.







Further stills from "Edinburgh."
The upper two illustrate the quaint closes and courts typical of Edinburgh and the lower is a glimpse of the Grassmarket through a gun-port in the Castle wall.

To lovers of any form of drama its failure to seize so great an opportunity would be depressing. But to the cinema fan it must appear criminal and self-destructive, not only because the drama of Men and Things needs telling, but because it is the cinema's peculiar province. The material is there, the medium is there, the audience waits only for the creation. And stimulated by so fruitful a combination of circumstances the heads of the cinema industry are put together and succeed in producing a well-groomed piece of nonsense like On the Air. The cinema fan, as he swallows his weekly dose of syncopated sex, would think the directors completely ignorant of the times they live in were it not for the strong development of one contemporary characteristic, the capacity to abuse technical skill and to miss great opportunities.

These opportunities can never be taken by the stage dramatist. He is concerned not with People but with Persons. His scope is limited by the size of his stage. But the cinema has no bounds. Nothing is too big or too small or too complicated to be photographed; no two things are so completely disconnected that they may not be juxtaposed on the screen. And it is this ability to comprehend the smallest details and the most vast designs that

makes Environmental Drama its peculiar province.

RAMPANT REFORMERS

ERIC M. KNIGHT

The most newsworthy of all cinema items in America to-day concerns no feature film production. It is the sudden, tremendous, well-organized revolt of the public (led by reformers) against the

Hollywood movie.

The other day I sat in the largest public dining-room of one of the largest cities in the United States. Although Americans are notable luncheon-goers and speech-listeners, I was amazed at the crowd. Every seat was taken. The Hollywood movie was deplored as immoral; basely misrepresentative of America; the source of a vast amount of juvenile crime and sex delinquency. Clubwomen, civic leaders, clergy of all denominations, applauded. Funds were raised to continue the war on "the immoral movie."

So at last, it seems, the shiny, shoddy material of the California celluloid-factories is gagging in the throat of this land. It is as if

the diet has, at last, made the public retch.

227

Yet, real as this sudden organized revolt is, it is important for those interested in the film as such to valuate properly such an

uprising. Will it mean anything to cinema?

The uprising here comes from two sources: the church and the reform group. The Catholic Church, generally slow to wrath in such affairs, has its sentiment reflected in the public utterance of a leading Philadelphia official who declared that "one movie can often undo the work that the church can do in two years" in regard to children. He follows with stronger armament: that if movies don't improve the only answer would be "call for a boycott by the Sacred Heart organization." No idle threat, this, for such a move by the powerful Roman Catholic Church would affect no less than

70,000 people in this area alone.

Protestant bodies are no less suddenly antagonistic to the motion picture as food for young stomachs. The other element is the reform group. It will be hard for Britain to understand the Puritanical strain that runs strongly through so many Americans and makes them natural-born zealots in reforms. It is a curious national trait. Most Englishmen are happy as long as no one passes a law that interferes with their private comfort; many Americans are never so happy as when pushing through a law that forces everyone to conform to a law "that ought to be good for them." We are out to save everyone. This reform element now finds itself in the same boat with the great criminal element. The repeal of Prohibition put them both out of a job. The criminals have turned to kidnapping; the reformers turn to movie-reforming. Both are causing us much trouble.

But I must add that no country but America could have staged such a remarkable movie-reform programme as we have now. For the reformers have used—breathe it reverently—science. again I am conscious that no British audience can feel the American thrill as I write this. For popular science, here, is a god of gods. You may think science abstract or cold. Here it is warm—living among us. The veriest child here knows what science is. It is the thing that howls and yowls to us from radios, placards, newspaper ads., and street-car signs. Science proves that there is only one perfect cigarette, lipstick, auto tyre, floorwax, chewing-gum, deodorant, laxative or roach powder—except every other kind which (by the weird machinations of business men and scientists) comes similarly endorsed. This new and awful bogey of science thrills the American people with fear and sends them madly rushing to buy the latest article. So highly regarded is science in the mass mind to-day that no one pauses to doubt—to see that scientific facts are like bacteria you can always find one kind that will gobble up the other!

Aware of the bugaboo of science in the lay mind, the most

powerful anti-film workers have employed "science" to show that movies are dire and dreadful. For four years men toiled—men of impeccable reputation—psychologists and criminologists, doctors and professors and nerve specialists. Financed by the Payne Fund, they compiled data and got up their reports. And, armed with these, the Motion Picture Research Council is sweeping the country to action.

The reports of these excellent research specialists cannot be refuted. The nigger in the woodpile, however, is the "presentation of these findings." Thus we find that the deus ex machina of this newly powerful Research Council is William H. Short, director. Mr. Short had written a book against movies before any of the researches were made—hardly the coldly unprejudiced mind that science considers desirable. And his presentation of facts is in-

teresting. Again, we need psychology, for he exclaims!

Exclaiming out loud is a popular game. It goes like this. I may discover that industrial accidents claim 1,240 lives a year in Pennsylvania. That is cold fact. But notice the difference if I exclaim: "Just think! In this great and sovereign state of ours no less than 1,240 human creatures laid down their lives on the altar of ruthless, mechanized industry, and this in the space of one short year!" You begin to feel that there's something very wrong indeed here—

maybe that industry should be abolished to save human life.

Thus the Research Council exclaims. It spent \$200,000 on research. I have before me six well-bound volumes of reports. They bombard one with "scientific facts" such as that 102 of 252 delinquent girls said it was "the movie-made urge" that "landed them in trouble"; that 54 out of 110 inmates of a penal institution said movies gave them a desire to carry a gun; that 23 said "that movies taught them how to fool police"; that male delinquents testified using "certain types of movies as excitants for arousing and

stimulating the passions of girls."

But the prize scientific fact of all is that tests showed that after going to movies children had great increase in sleep motility (turning of the body) and that in boys it averaged 26 per cent and girls 14 per cent. The horror of this shows when you learn that a similar sleep motility increase is produced by drinking two cups of coffee. And, while this finding is beyond argument, no one rationalizes it by measuring increased motility on, let us say, Christmas Eve, or after receiving a toy, or after visiting the Zoo. In fact, we might ask if increased movement in sleep is bad? Is all nervous stimulation bad? If so, isn't the polyp the happiest and best of living creatures and should we try to be like him?

But, again, you do not say these facts coldly. You exclaim. Just think! Sleep motility increases 26 per cent after movies.

"Horrors!" the listener answers, "As bad as all that?"

Thus it appears that, while the reform element will often be on the same side of the fence as the film-worker or cineaste; while that element often uses our own words in its own behalf, quoting critics and reviewers to bolster up arguments; really we are not one army.

For the reform movement, in America at least, is but a blind mass surge, a good old public emotional spree mixed with popular indignation, that has no end beyond making an outcry. For, sad as it will seem, the Motion Picture Research Council has no real answer to furtherance of the film. After a recent meeting I asked the President, Mrs. August Belmont, just how she proposed to get decent juvenile films before decent juveniles. There was no plan. Would they work toward a supply of well-made 16 mm. films—for the 16 mm. field awaited such development? "No," she smiled. "It was a bit disconcerting because I understood those sort of films all had to have different kinds of projectors." (Sic.)

So, the film follower must keep himself still isolated. He can't climb any white horses and ride in any parades. The truth is that all this reform sentiment means no more to films than the art of painting is furthered by that element that would like to go about the world making curators paint panties on the nude figures of canvasses. For they are carping at morals—and, it seems to me, morals have nothing

whatever to do with any art and never have had.

All I can think of is that the Payne Fund spent \$200,000 to prove what I or you could have told them without spending a cent: that Hollywood movies are pretty rancid tripe most of the time and not particularly good for weak-minded children or for adults whose physical or mental weaknesses make them prone to criminal life.

For, to do any good for the cinema you've got to love it—and love it for itself alone. And that's the trouble with the reformers. None of them love this poor darned thing made of celluloid. For, if they did, how could they spend \$200,000 on reports? How could they? In fact, how dare they?

Two hundred thousand dollars wasted to prove what we all know—and not one cent for real constructive work: to provide proper

films for children.

Oh for that lost \$200,000—so that we could stop caterwauling about what horrible pictures children see, and give them dozens of good ones instead.

BOOKS RECEIVED

AN INNOCENT IN HOLLYWOOD. By Clarence Winchester (London: Cassell. 2s. 6d.). The editor of the "Film Pictorial" gives his readers some more revelations.

THE EYES OF THE MOVIE. By Harry Alan Potamkin (New York: International Publishers. 55 cents.). An attack on the "treacherous re-action of the bourgeois film."

230

FILMING IN CEYLON

BASIL WRIGHT

PRODUCTION covered less than three months, of which seven weeks were devoted to almost continuous shooting. Final footage was 23,000 feet and about 1,000 stills were shot on a Leica by my assistant, John Taylor.

Highspots were (a) Sri Pada (Adam's Peak)—the world's holiest mountain—for over 2,000 years a centre of pilgrimage in the East. Seven thousand feet high and covered with dense jungle, except for the summit, a great triangle of grey rock on top of which, walled in and covered with a flimsy wooden canopy, is a huge footprint claimed by various creeds for Buddha, Siva, Adam, St. Thomas, Saman. Chiefly a Buddhist sanctuary. The shrine is reached by a flight of three thousand rock-hewn steps up which the pilgrims (they have counted 18,000 in a day) must climb barefoot. At dawn they worship; and at dawn the Peak casts its famous shadow —a seventy-mile-long triangle which hangs between sky and land, so that from the summit you can look down through it on to the hills and valleys below. We staged our own pilgrimage, taking some fifty Buddhists including old men, women and children, and covered the whole thing in thirty-six hours—including a freezing night in deck-chairs on the summit. The pilgrims were perfect actors, being quite unselfconscious, and wholly immersed in the religious significances of their pilgrimage. As for the shadow—which lasts for about twenty minutes—we put two cameras on it and filmed it at every possible camera speed and exposure. We obtained best results from f 5.6, sixteen frames a second, graduated filter K1 to blank; and from f 3.5, turning dead slow, with red (Wratten A)

(b) The Buried Cities—Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya—whose architectural remains seemed to me as good, if not better, than many of the more famous sights of ancient civilisation. The remains at Polonnaruwa (at its peak in twelfth century, A.D.) ate up some 3,000 feet of film in two days. They built either in rich red brick or in granite. The brick was often covered with thick plaster painted with coloured frescoes. We cleared a patch of jungle away to shoot a forty-foot-long recumbent Buddha—covered with

cobwebs and surrounded by the footprints and droppings of bears. We used 150 square feet of reflectors and shot with a red (Wratten A) filter, thus getting an effect of internal glow on to the carvings and statues. We filmed the same objects at dawn, at midday, at evening.

And we could easily have shot the whole 23,000 feet there.

(c) Dancing. Kandyan dancing is an excellent example of primitive movements formalised and classicised by tradition and religion, yet retaining the vigour of prehistoric origin. Like good Orientals they dance with their whole bodies; and they take it seriously. They go into a dancing school as early as four years old, and after twelve years training about two out of every ten are judged good enough to join a troupe. The dresses are elaborate and ceremonially significant. We had the idea of showing our dancers at their ordinary life in the village before revealing them in their more godlike guise, and so we took entire possession of their village for six days. We attempted to shoot not merely for sensational or romantic effect; we aimed also at an analysis of at least three of their dances. In this job again we needed every ounce of light from our reflectors. As we were shooting silent we have had to bring some of the dancers to England for synchronising purposes.

In addition to the big stuff, we filmed many aspects of life in the island, taking wild rushes out to sea in catamarans or shooting more peacefully a rice harvest in a fold of the Uva hills. But in all the shooting our idea, apart from the production of certain one-reelers, was to achieve a co-ordination of all the primary elements of Ceylon into a construction which should carry a conviction, not merely of what Ceylon now superficially is, but of what Ceylon stands for in the line of that vital history which is measured in terms of statues, monuments, religion, and of human activity. It can easily be seen how the inter-relation of our three highspots forms the

controlling factor of all the material.

The film is now on the cutting bench, and it is interesting to note that material which, had we shot it last year in the West Indies, would have been a first choice, goes now straight into the waste bin, rejected purely for its externality, its superficiality—in fact, for its documentary remoteness.

The synchronisation of the film will be a problem calling for very solid experimentation in sound technique. But there is no space

to go into that here.

Make sure of perfect photography by using

THE CINEMATOGRAPHER'S BOOK OF TABLES

An indispensible companion for the professional and amateur camera-man.

Pocket size, 5s. By post 5s. 3d., from

ACTIVITY IN BELGIUM

Though film clubs are having a difficult time due to financial stringency and public apathy, another new society, known as Art 7, has been founded in Brussels under the control of a Committee of critics of all opinions. Its performances so far have included revivals of The Italian Straw Hat, Metropolis, The Crowd, as well as two Dutch shorts, Koelinga's Blind Alley and Dick Laan's Football.

Le Club de l'Ecran, after a period of inactivity, has arranged a further series of performances which have included The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari and two other Dutch films, Profondeur and Pubite by Hans Sluizer—disappointing experiments showing the thorough sterility of super-realism as applied to artistic creation. Equally disappointing is Ankara, Coeur de la Turquie by Youtkevitch. This reportage of a Soviet delegate's visit to Turkey is even less successful than many American travelogues. In L'Orage (The Thunderstorm), however, Le Club de l'Ecran produced a good fragment, well coloured, clever realism, lacking variety but with a well sustained rhythm.

An entire evening was devoted to British films produced by the G.P.O. Unit, preceded by a lecture by Stuart Legg. The programme included Industrial Britain, Cargo from Jamaica, Cable Ship and O'er Hill and Dale. Cable Ship and Industrial Britain roused special attention. In the former the image is both perfect and simple, giving charm to a technical subject and a significance approaching symbolism. The latter showed a profound feeling for cinema, though a little too compact for the average spectator, whom the absence of transitions and the rapidity of the cutting seemed to disconcert. At first sight, however, the experiment of the G.P.C. seems decisive and appears like the birth of a truly popular cirema which both the man in the street and the aesthete can appreciate.

Another notable event is the return of Charles de Keukelire from the Congo, to which country he undertook a voyage of discovery with a motor expedition. He has brought back with him much film which he has now begun to put together as a documentary of the many aspects of the great Belgian colony. This is the first experiment of the kind attempted in Belgium.

Carlo Queeckers is also just back from Portugal, where he has been shooting exteriors for *Paiënne*. Other scenes have been shot on the outskirts of Brussels and considerable curiosity has been aroused in this film, which is the first work of an international

DENMARK. The Bride of Palo, the documentary film of Greenland on which Knud Rasmussen was at work when he died, has now been completed and edited according to his original script. Reminiscent of Flaherty's Nanook of the North, it has for its theme the rivalry of two hunters for the hand of an Eskimo girl, and contains stirring scenes of danger and storm. The acting is done entirely by Eskimos and care has been taken to film many of the native rites and customs. The film is proving a popular success in Denmark, and because of its educational value it has been exempted from entertainments tax.

ITALY. World-wide interest is being taken in the great cinema exhibition to be held in Venice during August. Representative films from almost every country will be screened and trophies will be awarded for the best Italian and foreign films and for the best director, scenarist, actor, actress, and photographer. There will also be special awards for the best documentary film and the best animated cartoon. Among the British films expected to be shown

are Don Juan, Blossom Time, Man of Aran and Contact.

The Melba-esque Venice of moonlight and gondolas is to be "debunked" by a film which Francesco Pasinetti is to direct for Venezia Film from a scenario by P. M. Pasinetti. Venice will be shown as a city of workers and steamers as well as of loungers and

palaces.

U.S.A. As a result of the NRA restrictions on block booking American exhibitors now have greater freedom in their choice of pictures. Competition between the independent producers and the large studios has thus been intensified. A stiff fight is in prospect and in an attempt to beat the independents by quantity production one studio alone is planning to put out no fewer than ninety pictures next year.

Charles Breasted has produced for the Oriental Institute of Chicago University The Human Adventure, a summary of man's rise from primitive life to civilization. A 6,000 miles air journey round the Institute's various expeditions throughout the East gives

movement and unity to the survey.

An official film of native tribal life is being made for the Mexican

government by Wallace Smith.

AUSTRALIA. Australia does not take its film art seriously. At least not in an organized form. We have no group movements of earnest film students and none are likely to emerge while the present scheme of censorship continues to function. This system

234



Douglas Fairbanks with Benita Hume in "The Private Life of Don Juan," a new London Film Production completed at Elstree. Direction: Alexander Korda. Photography: Georges Périnal.



From "Rising Tide," a film of the new Southampton Dock, by Paul Rotha. Production: Gaumont-British Instructional. Photography: Pocknall.

Above—Unemployed at the docks.

Below—Charging steel furnaces, from the industrial sequence.



denies the right of entrance to practically all foreign films. Of those reviewed during the past year in Cinema Quarterly we haven't seen one. The only film clubs in Australia are The Good Film League and Imperial Film Club. Both exist more or less for the benefit of patriotic British-Australians whose sole desire appears to be to flag-wave and "Boost British." Such organizations spend most of their time demanding a higher standard of films from American producers and then feature at a special screening for club members a British picture based on a bedroom plot in which the hero and heroine indulge in suggestive scenes and risqué dialogue. But it is all good clean fun, if it is British! Such clubs can be summarily dismissed so far as being considered as engaging in any attempt even remotely to study film art.

LEON S. STONE.

AUSTRIA. A film acted entirely by gypsies is being made by Fritz Weiss. A special feature will be the playing of genuine traditional music as opposed to the pseudo-gypsy music to which film-goers have become familiar.

FRANCE. Julien Duvivier is to direct for Ichthys Films Le Golgotha, a "real life" drama of Calvary written by Joseph Reymond.

René Clair's latest film, in production at Joinville, is entitled Le Dernier des Milliardaires. Max Dearly and Marthe Mello are in the cast.

MISCELLANY

CINEMATIC COLOUR

Probably nowhere in Hollywood are the new attributes of the cinema seized upon and applied and perfected with such immediate appreciation of their film values as in the Disney Studio. Forsyth Hardy, in the Spring 1933 Number of Cinema Quarterly, lauded the first colour Silly Symphonies of Walt Disney. Since then, Disney and his staff have continued to develop the colour cartoon. Disney is so convinced of the success of his colour cartoons that he may produce Mickey Mouse in colour. Of late he and his co-workers have been evolving a method of giving his Silly Symphonies more depth and perspective by means of cut out foregrounds beneath which the actual animation takes place. But of greater significance to the progress of the colour film has been the introduction of "cinematic colour" into some of the more recent Silly Symphonies.

237

Cinematic colour (a coined expression) may be defined as colour in the process of changing from one hue to another. The colour in the early Silly Symphonies, as in painting, was static. The colour on the animated figures and on the backgrounds did not change. Mobile colour has been employed in other forms of expression. The theatre offers an obvious example in stage lighting where the dramatic and spectacular possibilities of modulating colour have been often effectively appropriated. But Disney has been the first (as far as the writer is aware) to use changing colour in films.

When the big bad wolf in Three Little Pigs blows on the wind-proof brick house until he is exhausted, his face turns first pale, then purple. Here Disney employed cinematic colour as a humorous gag. In Lullaby Land the dream of the baby reaches a nightmarish climax in the dance of the smoky bogeys. These figures would have been fantastic and frightening enough with their contortions and shape transformations and strange ejaculations, but their chimeric actions are enormously intensified because their variations in shape are accompanied by changes in colour (dark terrifying green, brown, and purple). In The Grasshopper and the Ants Disney used cinematic colour more thoroughly than in any other of his Silly Symphonies. The picture begins in the summer with the land and the grasshopper green. Change in colour with fall. Change in colour with winter. The grasshopper, hungry and cold, becomes pale, and then an icy blue. Saved from freezing to death by the thrifty ants, his blue turns back to green as he is being revived. Cinematic colour thus played a part not only in symbolizing the change in seasons, but in describing the changing physical state of the grasshopper.

The possibilities of cinematic colour in regular motion pictures are endless; however, until realistic colour is more satisfactorily

reproduced, Disney has the field to himself.

MACK W. SCHWAB.

THOUGHTS ON MONTAGE

To determine the nature of montage is to solve the specific problem of the film.—Eisenstein in "Experimental Cinema."

Montage is not an idea recounted by pieces following each other, but an idea that arises in the collision of pieces independent of each other.—Eisenstein in the same article.

Montage is the mathematics of film-construction, the dialectical principles governing the dynamics of film form.—Eisenstein, quoted by Seymour Stern, in the same issue of "Experimental Cinema."

Montage may be understood as the inclusive, creative and con-

structive unity that is present from the birth of the first gleam of idea in the mind of the scenarist to the final act of assembling the film strips by constructive editing and cutting.—Paul Rotha in "The Film Till Now."

Montage—The act of assembling material, whether of scenario, of material in the studio or on location, or of the strips of celluloid bearing photographic images during the editing.—Definition by Paul Rotha in "The Film Till Now."

The only possible English equivalent (of montage) is editing.—

Ivor Montagu's notes on Pudovkin's "Film Technique."

The foundation of film art is editing (montage) . . . I repeat that editing is the creative force of film reality.—Pudovkin's introduction to his "Film Technique."

Montage is "the logic," "the structural principle of film-

language."-Pudovkin, quoted by Seymour Stern.

Montage does not mean cutting, although manifestly it cannot be achieved without resort to the physical operation of cutting.— Seymour Stern in the same article.

Montage means joining together shots of situations that occur at different times and in different places.—Rudolf Arnheim in

"Film."

Fifteen principles of montage*:—1. Change of place; 2. Change of position of the camera; 3. Change of camera angle; 4. Stressing of details; 5. Analytical montage; 6. Past time; 7. Future time; 8. Parellel events; 9. Contrast; 10. Association; 11. Concentration; 12. Enlargement; 13. Monodramatic montage; 14. Refrain; 15. Montage.—Timoshenko, quoted by Arnheim.

Montage is film editing done constructively.—B. V. Braun in

"film art."

Montage is mechanized imagination.—Herbert Read in Cinema Quarterly.

There is no such thing as montage.—G. F. Dalton in Cinema Quarterly.

Mounted by G. F. Dalton.

BOOKS RECEIVED

THE HOME CINEMA. By J. P. Laurie (London: Chapman and Hall. 3s. 6d.). An unpretentious guide for the novice. Particular attention is paid to projection, and amateurs are sensibly advised to avoid Hollywood subjects for filming.

THE CENSOR, THE DRAMA, AND THE FILM, 1900—1934. By Dorothy Knowles (London: Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.) For Review in next issue. MANU. L. OF LAW FOR THE CINEMA TRADE. By Gordon Alchin. (London: Pitman. 30s.)

For Review in next issue.

*Compare the traditional classification of eggs:-

1. New-laid eggs; 2. Fresh eggs; 3. Eggs; 4. Eggs for election purposes.

239

DECENT DOCUMENTS

FORSYTH HARDY

An attempt to trace a serious social purpose in the manifestations of the commercial movie is merely mis-spent energy. Behind every social document there must be a sincere and solid purpose to give it perspective and point of view. Behind the commercial film there is no greater purpose than to swell the tinkle at the box-office till. Basil Wright once put the point neatly when writing of I Am a Fugitive, that exciting exposure of penitentiary conditions in the Southern States. Sensing the absence from the film of the fundamental decency of sincerity, he suggested that "the reason after all, for lavishing cash on this production was not primarily a burning desire to rid the U.S.A. of one of its myriad plague-spots; it was simply that the story was sensational enough to draw box-office cash in excess of studio expenditure." The conditions under which the commercial cinema operates make it not so much difficult as unnecessary to produce decent documents of the life of the people. When such films as The World Changes, Gabriel Over the White House, The Mayor of Hell and Golden Harvest appear, we ought not merely to reject them for the underlying insincerity of their purpose, but recognize and record that they are preferable alternatives to Hips Hips, Hooray! Merry Wives of Reno and Bottoms Up! They become interesting when they attempt to do something more ambitious than provide a variant on the formula of the guy and the girl and who-gets-who. But it would be idle to magnify these chance accidents of production into something as large and important as a serious application to a social purpose.

It is necessary to make this point in order to place the major films of the quarter in their proper perspective. The case of Man of Aran is discussed by Ralph Bond and I need not elaborate. Man of Aran, as he points out, breaks the fundamental documentary principle of "the creative treatment of actuality." All that Flaherty has stood for in cinema, all his fine achievement amidst an unfriendly film world, led us to expect a restrained if romantic record of the life of a people, significantly selective in detail and appreciative of the nuances of common feeling. To a certain extent, of course, the film successfully reflects the life of the islanders: any other result would surely be impossible after some two years of filming on the islands; but for too much of its length is Man of Aran concerned with

240

in "Rapt," a Swiss film directed by Dmitri Kirsanov.



From "Unfinished Symphony," directed by Willi Forst. An Austrian film, based on the Schubert romance.





Marlene Dietrich and John Lodge in "The Scarlet Empress" (Paramount), directed by Josef von Sternberg. Photography: Bert Glennon.

sensational incidents which are unjustified when not set against a natural background to give them perspective. The Flaherty of Nanook and Moana is the last person from whom we expected boxoffice sensationalism. Nor is it easy to accept the explanation, passed on by C. A. Lejeune, that Man of Arran is but a trailer for a longer film. If the real story of Aran is "the fight to hold the land against eviction," and "the windjammers in the big seas off the islands, where the Armada broke," why did Flaherty spend so much time and energy in recording with painstaking elaboration two storms at sea and a tussle with a shark? If his purpose, according to the "trailer" explanation, was "to pique our curiosity," he might have assessed more highly our powers of anticipation. With infinite regret —for Flaherty represented the one hope of carrying documentary into the wider field of the picture houses—we must write off Man of Aran as a beautiful essay in box-office sensationalism with little more significance than if it had been produced from purely box-office motives.

Viva Villa represents another attempt by the film-makers to record something of the life of a people on the screen; and, whatever the film's shortcomings, we prefer an ambitious to a dormant Hollywood. There was always less chance of this succeeding as a social document than of Man of Aran. Flaherty did not have the film star to contend with and there was in his approach more than a germ of sincerity; but behind Viva Villa there was but the keen commercial force of M.G.M. and the film is not insensitive to the influences which were brought to bear on it. It is a rapid, rousing entertainment, a spectacle and an excitement which, despite all its picturesque finery and sentimental trappings, will rouse a stronger feeling of protest against oppression than did Thunder over Mexico.

Here, as in The House of Rothschild, the presence of protest gives the theme a compelling urge: what might have been a paltry pageant of the past becomes a modern pamphlet with a vigorous message. Superficially The House of Rothschild is the story of the rise to power of the famous banking house which gained control of European finance at the time of the Napoleonic wars, and especially of Nathan Rothschild, whose loan to the Allies before Waterloo secured freedom from oppression and equality of trading for the Jewish people. But we do not miss the significance of Nathan Rothschild's appeal for his people or fail to see in the threatening figures of Metternich and Ledrantz, the forces of Hitler and Goebbels. The producer, Darryl Zanuck, does not seek to hide his aim: "I have found that the best way to tell a timely story is to take material a hundred years old. It prevents literal-minded people from making narrow objections on petty grounds. And it leaves everyone free to make whatever parallels with the present day he likes." The film makes an eloquent and persuasive protest against political tyranny and racial prejudice. There are no half-tones in the propaganda: the Jew is shown as excessively righteous, with the ghost of the moneylender afar off, while the Ledrantz of Boris Karloff is a blood-and-thunder villain, without intelligence. This is at once the strength and the weakness of the film: strength in its use of cinema as a direct plea for the rehabilitation of German Jewry; weakness in its unbalanced attitude and sentimental belief in the inevitably virtuous Jew. George Arliss has his most worth-while part since Disraeli and for once the film is allowed to

have an existence apart from his own performance.

Not many of the other films of the quarter escape the conventional categories. Like Rotha, I find Rowland Brown's Blood Money exciting and significant, a vigorous analysis of the curious moralities of the American underworld. There is something vital in Brown's compact and compelling methods which Sternberg never achieves with his finicking, fluttering filming in The Scarlet Empress. Sternberg has succumbed to the numbing influences of Hollywood while Brown has fought for his independence. G. W. Pabst does not appear to have been successful in retaining his freedom of expression in Hollywood. In A Modern Hero, his adaptation of Louis Bromfield's novel, there is little to suggest the director of Kameradschaft and Don Quixote. Significantly it is dismissed in a trade paper as a "Safe popular booking, especially for star fans"! The star is not of course, the director. Among the quarter's other novels adapted as films is All Men Are Enemies, which retains the title but little of significance from Richard Aldington's novel. Meanwhile revue films remain steady, with Murder at the Vanities a feature, while support is appearing for animal films, Frank Buck's Wild Cargo participating prominently in the movement.

With the exception of Man of Aran and Wings Over Everest, there are no notable British films of the quarter, though Jew Suss, Chu Chin Chow and The Private Life of Don Juan suggest interesting achievement on the way. The Secret of the Loch is a melodramatic account of what is regarded in Scotland as something more than a popular superstition or mass halucination. The elusiveness of the subject has up till now made a documentary difficult.

Among the foreign films, which have come mostly from France, notable are Rapt, an adaptation of the novel by C. F. Ramuz, La Séparation des Races, directed by Dmitri Kirsanov with music by Honegger; Crainquebille, a modern version by Jacques de Baroncelli of the Anatole France story filmed some ten years ago by Jacques Feyder; and The Loves of Ariane, a censored version of the early Czinner-Bergner film released now in order to profit from the popularity of the star of Catherine the Great.

Production: Gainsborough. Direction and Photography: Robert Flaherty. Scenario and Editing: John Goldman. Music: John Greenwood. Distributors: Gaumont-British. Length, 7,047 feet.

ESCAPISM is a disease common to the commercial film. Remoteness from or distortion of reality is the hall-mark of almost all box-office pictures. Movie, as a consequence, reflects a world totally at variance with the experience of the great mass of people. Documentary is, or should be, something different. It takes fact and experience, discovers and brings out the essential drama in lives and events, avoids

sensationalism and sticks closely to the truth.

Which brings us to Man of Aran. Probably no Flaherty film has been so eagerly awaited. Newspaper film critics had fed us with lively stories of the two years spent by Flaherty in Aran, and the rumour merchants had been busy with tales of gigantic achievements in the making. So we were all nicely keyed up for the first night at the New Gallery and even managed to endure the massed band of the Irish Guards. The men of Aran were there in force, having spent many busy weeks in London recording the sound track, being photographed in odd corners and even making personal appearances.

We were rewarded with a film which for photographic beauty has rarely been equalled. There is no doubting Flaherty's genius for dramatizing the conflict between man and Nature. The storm scenes in the opening and closing sequences reveal Flaherty cutting at its best. But two storms and a shark hunt do not make a picture and we are more concerned with what Flaherty has left out than with what he has put in. For here we come up against the element of escapism. Man of Aran is escapist in tendency, more so probably than any previous Flaherty production. Flaherty would have us believe that there is no class struggle on Aran, despite ample evidence to the contrary. There is a sequence in the film showing the islanders scraping for precious drops of soil in the rock crevices, but no mention, as Ivor Montagu said in the "Daily Worker," of the absentee landlords who sent men to tear down their huts and scatter their soil, in default of payment for things they had made themselves.

If Flaherty lived on the islands for two years he must have known these things. Why then, does he not tell us about them? Why does he merely present us with the spectacle of a handful of islanders (out of a population of twelve hundred) waging incessant war against the fury of the sea? We must assume that he is a romantic idealist striving to escape the stern and brutal realities of life, seeking ever to discover some back-water of civilization untouched by the problems

and evils affecting the greater world outside. But his field is being narrowed down: the back-waters themselves reflect, on a smaller scale it is true, these very problems and evils. Nowhere in the world can we escape the realities of life—the struggle of man not only against Nature but against land sharks and capitalist exploitation, and the poverty and slavery that goes with it. Thus Flaherty's world is a world of dreams; it exists only in his imagination. Unfortunately, fairy tales, however beautiful and artistic, have nothing to do with

Flaherty has not only concealed the existence of the class struggle on Aran. He (or Gaumont-British) has gone all out for box-office sensationalism. We are led to believe that the men in the shark hunt faced fearful dangers, whereas the sharks in these waters are comparatively harmless creatures. A small boat rides through a sea so gigantic that no ordinary boat could live in it for five minutes. And so on. Very little is seen of the life on the island itself and nothing of the island customs, traditions and ceremonies. It is one more example of the Barnum method of beating the big drum furiously on the principle that the more noise you make the better must the picture be.

It is all rather tragic—for Aran has all the makings of a superb documentary film. But then perhaps, Gaumont-British would not

have been so interested. . . .

RALPH BOND.

OCTOBER

Production: Sovkino. Direction: S. M. Eisenstein. Photography: Edouard Tissé. Scenario: Alexandrov. Art Direction: V. I. Kovrigin. Distribution: Film Society. Length: 13,000 feet (approx.).

This film held me absorbed throughout the entire thirteen reels and it was not until some hours later that my critical senses re-asserted themselves. In its conception and in its realization, the film is so tremendous that it deserves more than passing notice. It is of course silent, though a musical score was composed by Meisel and played at the Film Society show. The music was bad and continually at war with the film; it seemed cheap and tinny compared with the greatness of the film unreeling itself above.

The film covers the period from February to November, 1917, the collapse of the Tsarist government, the coming and going of the Kerensky Provisional Government, the fight between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks (with the Trotsky share carefully expugned) and the final establishment of the Soviets. A great theme

that has been greatly expressed.



From "Wheatfields in East Anglia," an educational film, produced by Gaumont-British Instructional and directed by Mary Field. Photography: Pocknall.



Your Booking Difficulties SOLVED!

- One of the greatest problems which face organisers of cinema performances in connection with film societies, clubs, institutes, schools, etc., is to know how to obtain the films they want: where to apply for them: how much they cost.
- To overcome this difficulty CINEMA QUAR-TERLY has established a central organisation, with direct Wardour Street connections, which will not only supply this information but will carry out the necessary negotiations with the appropriate renters.
- A vast amount of unnecessary correspondence and labour will by this means be avoided—to the relief both of exhibiting societies and trade distributors.
- CINEMA QUARTERLY makes no charge for this new service which is intended as a convenience both to readers and to the trade, through whose regular channels all bookings will be arranged.

The only stipulation is that all enquiries must be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope.

CINEMA QUARTERLY FILM SERVICE 24 N.W. THISTLE STREET LANE EDINBURGH, 2

Telegrams: TRICOLOUR, EDINBURGH

There have been all kinds of criticism directed against the film; its symbols were cheap, its cutting obvious, etc. It should be remembered that the film was made in 1927. Then, its technique was revolutionary. But though there may be symbolism that we have since rejected, bad photography, cheap effect cutting, they are all as nothing beside the realisation of a great conception. All the good looks in the world are not going to make a film. What matters is the content, the theme. Beautiful photography, smooth direction are worthless, (vide Viva Villa) if there is no theme behind the picture,

if no thought has gone to the making of it.

There is such a wealth of virtues in the film that it is difficult to isolate individual sequences for consideration. Perhaps the raising of the bridge is the greatest individual piece of cutting in the film. Nothing inanimate on the screen yet has been so supercharged with idea as that bridge. Never has the cinema been used so effectively for satire as in the Kerensky episode. Satire is not achieved inside the frame, but by relation, by movie methods. The economy of shots Eisenstein uses to create an effect should be a lesson to movie directors. There are places in which the film sags, particularly when Eisenstein uses twenty minutes of screen time to express the twenty minutes before the Bolsheviks took over the revolution. The sequence in the Tsarina's bedroom is masterly; the young sailor is momentarily affected by the visible symbols of royalty and the conquering of tradition in his mind is superbly suggested.

This film is the work of a master, one of the few directors who have left an indelible stamp on the work of film producers all over

the world.

D. F. TAYLOR.

BLOOD MONEY

Production: 20th Century. Written and Directed by Rowland Brown.
Photography: J. Van Trees. Distribution: United Artists. Length:
5,740 feet.

Rowland Brown has probably gone nearer to presenting a logical social explanation of the racket system of business in America than any other movie director, and despite the mawling of hirelings Blood Money gets across a sincere expression of social feeling. As a picture, it parades most of the familiar ingredients of the stereotyped box-office subject. It is patent that Brown has written a movie story which he knew would prove acceptable to the mentalities of the picture business, yet which at the same time allowed him a little freedom for his own outlook. Hence we get an admirable interpretation of a millionaire's daughter (from Frances Dee of all

people!) with a leaning towards kleptomania and a more-thanleaning towards the physical stimulus of men as far removed from her own social set as are her father's ideas of business from the South Sea Islands which he exploits for his millions. The high-spot climax, including a last-minute rescue, is in the true Griffith tradition and as old as cinema itself, but because of its grand cutting and use of sound, gets across on a modern audience better than anything else of its kind that I have seen this year. At more leisurely moments, such as the parting scene between the bond-bailiff and his woman, Brown reveals a hitherto unsuspected tenderness of direction which probably arises from his complete understanding of the mentalities of the types that he is portraying. Many small touches will bring admiration for the man's intelligence; for example, the departmental-store chief's air-cushion and the releasing of the greyhounds at the race track. Almost every shot and certainly every line of dialogue has point and needs watching. Eight hundred feet are removed from this English version. From what is left, you will judge Brown as a firstrate director awaiting freedom of story and treatment and a square production deal.

PAUL ROTHA.

VIVA VILLA

Production and Distribution: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Direction: Jack Conway. Photography: James Wong Howe. Dialogue: Ben Hecht. With Wallace Beery, Fay Wray, Stuart Erwin, Leo Carrillo, H. B. Walthall. Length 9,862 feet.

The Eisenstein influence lingers on in Hollywood. Not only directly inspired in theme by Thunder Over Mexico, Viva Villa in addition repeats a great many of the actual set-ups from the Eisenstein film. It purports to be the story of the Mexican peons' attempt to free themselves. Unfortunately for the realisation of the film, the Americans could not rid themselves of the idea that Mexicans are white "niggers" and as such, figures of low comedy, or "bad hombres," and as such figures of cowboy melodrama. They have conceived the Mexican fight for independance on the lines of a Western with all the attendant plot circumstances we know so well. The film must have been a headache for M.G.M. The only way they could avoid the great social issues involved was to convert the revolution into cowboy gunfights and to concentrate on personalities. Consequently the whole film fails as a social document; revolutionary ideals become purposeless when there are no causes.

Compare this film with October—in the two films there are similar themes—and you will see the wide gulf which separates the social

film from the entertainment film. Symbols such as a hand clutching a piece of earth become merely sentimental patriotism, the oppression of people becomes just another high spot. The actors wade through lathers of cheap American sentimentality; the leading of a revolution is degraded to the posturing of movie stars. Pancho Villa is played by Beery as a villain with a heart of gold beneath a rugged exterior; he alternates between slobbering mawkishness and brutal half-wittedness. All the stock situations and characters are grafted on to a theme that should have swept outside personalities into the larger heroisms of mass action. Leo Carrillo as Villa's assistant is the only character in the film. Dialogue, by Ben Hecht, is first rate. Production is very uneven, with the camerawork better than the Mexican Tissé.

The film ends leaving everything fine in Mexico, and there is not a word about the peons of whom so much was heard in the earlier reels, not a word about their continued exploitation by business interests. Comparison with October should prove interesting and should go further to convince those at the crossroads of cinema that the film is not an art nor an entertainment, but an instrument

of propaganda.

D. F. TAYLOR.

SCARLET EMPRESS

Production and Distribution: Paramount. Direction: Josef von Sternberg. Photography: Bert Glennon. With Marlene Dietrich, John Lodge, Sam Jaffe, Louise Dresser. Length, 8,806 feet.

Seldom has there been a picture so reminiscent of other pictures. Almost every scene brings thoughts of Lubitsch, Stroheim, Dupont, Garmes, Mamoulian and even the surrealist Bunuel; inasmuch that this glamorous, sadistic fabrication appears one long procession of derivative ideas. Yet you cannot help laughing at Sternberg for his undisguised showman's tactics, his fake artistic clap-trap and his succulent debaucheries of photographic slickness; although here he is a Sternberg far removed from the simple days of Salvation Hunters and Docks of New York. Experience has taught him extravagance. Not one candle but a thousand; not one honest-to-god rape but a skilfully staged scene of perversion. He has reached that delectable state of ecstasy when he can throw away a twenty-five hundred dollar shot on a two-foot wipe and never move a muscle. Decadence indeed.

Comparison with Korda's Catherine the Great is as inevitable as it is instructive, and it is diverting to inspect two directors' handling of similar situations. Whereas the Korda-Czinner approach was gentle

and courteous, Sternberg's is brutal and exaggerated, revealing the effect of local environment on production. Sternberg's colossus contains every vice of the Hollywood firmament yet still contrives to achieve a more persuasive atmosphere than Korda's restraint and accuracy. But Dietrich's Catherine falls in the chocolate-box class whereas Bergner, although miscast, brought at least a cultured ability to her playing. A word must be said for the continuity which moves with tremendous pace of visuals and a clashing of bells and fanfares of trumpets. If you can stomach the gross over-acting, the monstrous leering background and the superficial direction, you may find moments of interest even though it requires a mounted Dietrich leading a cavalry charge up the palace staircase to the accompaniment of the Valkyrie Ride to stir you. Glennon's photography is luscious and the sound tempestuous.

PAUL ROTHA.

WINGS OVER EVEREST (British. G.—B.). This record of the Houston Mount Everest Flight is unique among the quarter's documentaries. It provides us with views seen by no man other than the four flyers. In the film the material taken on the two flights over Everest and the one over Kanchenjunga has been combined and the shots of the Roof of the World, of Everest among its seventy sister-peaks, of the mass of icy mountains rising into the sky, have a value and impressiveness which would withstand the most indifferent presentation. There are certainly shortcomings in treatment: prolonged sequences describing preparations; an artificially filmed interlude depicting an accident to the cameraman; and an unconvincing suggestion that the construction of two aeroplanes affected the unemployment figures in Britain. But these are offset by the economical handling of the Indian sequences, the reproduction of the modest and workmanlike character of the expedition and the effective restraint of Lord Clydesdale's comments after the flight: "Did you get there?" A nod. "What's it like?" "All right." We forget any previous shortcomings in the magnificence of the Everest sequences. Two shots are outstanding: the panorama across the mountain tops, with Everest and Makalu in the distance; and the comparative close-up of the north-east ridge by which the climbers have made their approaches to the crest. S. R. Bonnett's camerawork is consistently fine and the commentary does no obtrude. An important and impressive addition to the growing group of Everest pictures.

GUIDE TO FILM-GOING

THE BATTLE (French. Gaumont-British). An English version of a French film adapted from Claude Farrere's novel and directed by Nicolas Farkas, camerman on Don Quixote. An artificial quality marrs the melodrama but the spectacular battle scenes are authentic and Farkas ensures that the film is always interesting pictorially. Charles Boyer in Sessue Hayakawa's part and Merle Oberon act with strength and sincerity.

BLACK MAGIC (German. British Lion). A folk tale of the Malayan island of Bali, directed by Friedrich Dalsheim and Victor von Plessing, with native music and dialogue. A naïve story of primitive superstition gives the film unity and allows for a fascinating description of life on the island, with its striking religious ceremonial and curious trance dances. Finely photographed, exciting to listen to and put together with a sound sense of documentary.

CRAINQUEBILLE (French). The veteran Baroncelli's sound version of Anatole France's story, done as a notable silent by Feyder. It has atmosphere and observation, good characterisation and humour, although cinematically it is slow going. A Starevitch puppet sequence is clumsily inserted, striking the wrong note for such a dream sequence which Feyder achieved so well in Les Nouveaux Messieurs.

CRIME ON THE HILL (British. B.I.P.). A murder mystery of familiar type, interesting for the distinctive treatment of Bernard Vorhaus, a director rapidly attaining a position of importance in the studios. A film full of technical ingenuities is directed with a sincerity rare in British pictures.

DEATH TAKES A HOLIDAY (American. Paramount). A moving and impressive adaptation of Alberto Casella's play describing in psychological terms the events of three days spent on earth by Death in search of the source of mortal fear among men. Mitchell Leisen's exceptionally sensitive direction and the carefully controlled performances of an able cast secure a compelling expression of the author's theme, to whose peculiar qualities the film proves more sympathetic than the stage. After a whirlwind opening new to the play, movement dwindles but the theme does not become lost in a welter of words. A sincere gesture by Hollywood towards a more intelligent cinema.

EMPEROR JONES (American. United Artists). Theatrically conceived, naïvely directed, Paul Robeson's personality surmounts Dudley Murphey's amateurish handling of this O'Neill subject and in flashes reveals the tremendous screen presence that one day he may achieve.

IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT (American. Columbia). Frank Capra, most skilful of Hollywood's craftsmen, expends his talent in telling vivaciously and ingeniously the story of a tenacious reporter who, to secure a scoop, follows a runaway heiress across America in a transcontinental bus. An overlong account is kept entertaining through Capra's persuasive direction and the interpolation of several quite brilliantly observed sequences of which the hitch-hiking episode is the chief. Claudette Colbert and Clark Gable.

PECHEUR D'ISLANDE (French. Beacon). A stagey adaptation by Pierre Guerlais of Pierre Loti's novel, descriptive of the hardships endured by the Breton fisherfolk. A director out of sympathy with his medium has handled the story as if it were a stage play: people emote in front of the camera and talk endlessly. Some of the incidental shots are lovely, the atmosphere of the fishing village is effectively conveyed and there is a fine performance by Yvette Guilbert.

PRENEZ GARDE A LA PEINTURE (French. Beacon). The French version of the original play on which "The Late Christopher Bean" is based, directed by Henri Chomette, who is more successful than was Hollywood in retaining the wit and subtlety of René Fauchois's conception. The mentality of the French bourgeois family is effectively represented and Charlotte Clasis's interpretation of the dead painter's mistress is a moving performance.

TWENTIETH CENTURY (American. Columbia). A super-charged performance by John Barrymore in an ingeniously satirical adaptation of "Napoleon of Broadway," depicting the clash of wills between a grotesquely temperamental stage producer and the star he creates but cannot control. Written with a malicious sense of humour by Charles MacArthur and Ben Hecht and resourcefully directed

by Howard Hawks.

UNFINISHED SYMPHONY (Austrian). Sweet nonsense along familiar lines of Schubert's romance treated with sentimental direction and sincere playing. Nothing is achieved, nothing is lost, but it is a picture which disarms attack and thwarts defence by its sheer softness.

SEND YOUR QUERIES TO C.Q.

• TECHNICAL INFORMATION

on all points regarding apparatus, projection, cameras, exhibition, etc., will be answered free by acknowledged experts on receipt of stamped addressed envelope for reply.

ANOTHER C.Q. SERVICE FOR READERS

FILM SOCIETIES

Before next season commences it is expected that several new societies will have commenced operations. Aberdeen will have a Film Guild, of which the Hon. Secretary is J. M. Mitchell, 70, High Street, Old Aberdeen. In Ipswich a Film Society is being organized by Gordon C. Hales, 36 Constable Road, Ipswich. An Inverness Film Society is also proposed and communications should be sent to John Mitchell, Royal Bank Buildings, Inverness. Before long similar societies are hoped to be functioning in Bristol, Bo'ness, and Dunfermline.

As always, the help and advice of Cinema Quarterly are at the service of the movement, and anyone wishing to form a local film society is welcome to apply for

any information that may be required.

Cinema Quarterly Film Service, of which particulars will be found on another page, has been founded as the result of numerous requests received at this office from film societies, educational bodies, clubs and institutes, and is an attempt to simplify the somewhat harassing problem of film supply with which all organisers of special performances are faced. Member societies of the Federation of British Film Societies, of course, will continue to book through the Federation those films for which it makes special arrangements. The Cinema Quarterly Service, so far as it concerns the film societies, is intended to supplement the Federation's arrangements and will no doubt be found of great convenience in the booking of films which, though rented through the usual trade channels, often entail prolonged negotiations.

THE FILM SOCIETY, 56 Manchester Street, London, W.1. April 15th. La Vie D'Un Fleuve. Two French publicity films. Pirates du Rhone. Mail. Crainquebille.

May 6th. Film Favourites No. 1. Das Testament von Dr. Mabuse.

CHILDREN'S FILM SOCIETY has been formed to provide carefully selected programmes of films for children. The first group is operating in connection with the Everyman, Hampstead, and is under the direction of J. S. Fairfax-Jones, G. F. Noxon, and C. Lawson-Reece. It arranges matinees on lines similar

to these given in past seasons by the Edinburgh Film Guild. The subscription for

six shows is 10s.; guest tickets 2s. 6d.

CROYDON FILM SOCIETY, 51 High Street, Croydon. April 15th. Uberfall (Film Soc.). Pacific 231 (Film Soc.). Cargo from Jamaica (G.P.O.). Cable Ship (G.P.O.). En Natt (A.P.D.). April 29th. Trader Mickey (United). Is Gretna Green? (G.-B.). Ballet Aida (Filmophone). Rain (Film Soc.). Tempest (G.-B.). EDINBURGH FILM GUILD, 17 S. St. Andrew Street, Edinburgh, 2. Mar. 25th. Two Paramount News-reels. Cargo from Jamaica (G.P.O.). Granton Trawler (G.P.O). Island of Perils (Wardour). Finding His Voice (West. Elec.). Tabu (Paramount). April 8th. County of the White Rose (Film. Soc.). Schufftan Shots (Process Prod.). Harlequin (Film Soc.). Tonende Handschrift (Film Soc.). La Maternelle (Film Soc.). April 20th. General Meeting. White Hell of Pitz Palu (Pathescope, sub-standard).

LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY. Vaughan College, Leicester. March 17th. Paris Markets (Film Soc.). Canterbury (G.-B.). La Maternelle (Film Soc.). May

11th. General Meeting. Fall of the House of Usher. Rein que les Heures.

MAIDSTONE FILM SOCIETY has completed a successful first season with a comfortable financial balance. The final performance on April 15th, included

The Five Year Plan, Fifteenth October, and Doss House.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY, 29 Liverpool Street, Salford. April 21st. Zuyderzee Werks (Film Soc.) Carmen (Film Soc.). Zuts' Cartoon (Film Soc.). Potenkin (Arcos). This society is at present converting a disused basement into an experimental studio and projection theatre.

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Bluecoat Chambers, Liverpool. April 13th. Captain of Coepenick (Film Soc.). Hungarian Dance (Filmophone). A short documentary. Disney Cartoon. May 8th. Talk by Ingram Knowles on the Amateur Film-Maker. May 15th. F. Wilkinson on the Film in Education. As this society finds difficulty in obtaining suitable films for its special shows the policy in regard to future shows is at present under review.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY FILM SOCIETY. April 29th. Upstream (G.P.O.). Mascot (Electa). Building a Building (United). Bed and Sofa (Arcos). May 13th. Cargo from Jamaica (G.P.O.). Windmill in Barbados (G.P.O.). Mickey's Choo Choo (United). Carmen (Film Soc.). Hans Westmar. May 27th. Un Monastère (Film Soc.). Charlemagne. June 10th. Turbulent Timber (G.-B.). Busy Beavers (United). Noah's Ark (United). Ekstase (Film Soc.).

TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY, Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle, has completed a successful first season, which has included private Sunday performances, children's shows, and lectures. Next season will open with an exhibition of stills and it is hoped that film work with children will be further developed.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS NUMBER

G. R. CLARK. One of the G.P.O. Film Unit. JOHN GRIERSON. At present supervising production of a film for the B.B.C. C. R. JONES. Film student associated with several amateur productions. ERIC M. KNIGHT. Film editor of the "Philadelphia Public Ledger." HELEN SCHOENI. A New York journalist who has made a study of Russian

cinema. BERTHOLD VIERTEL. Director of The Wig, Nora and Adventures of a Ten-Mark Note in Germany of The Wise Sex and The Man from Yesterday in Hollywood; and of

Little Friend for Gaumont-British at Shepherd's Bush.

BASIL WRIGHT. A member of the G.P.O. Film Unit. Engaged on cutting material brought from Ceylon.

255

INDEPENDENT FILM-MAKER

Official Organ of The Independent Film-Makers Association

IFMA

THE IFMA has two very definite functions. The first of these, that of providing information and advice, is working overtime. This is as it should be. The second function is to collect information from members about their work and plans and to make this information available to other members.

At first sight this may seem superfluous; actually it is not. Every amateur is always coming up against difficulties in the surmounting of which he acquires knowledge which can be of very definite use to others.

To co-ordinate this information a Bulletin will shortly be issued to be followed by others at intervals of three months unless enough

news is received to warrant a more frequent issue.

The IFMA will be glad to receive notes about your work for publication in this Bulletin. It may be a technical trick that you have discovered or it may be an appeal for information about a location or a subject for a script. Please look upon this Bulletin as an opportunity to express yourself on any subject connected with the cinema.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Plans for the summer school have been completed and full particulars will appear in the first Bulletin. It is to be held at Digswell Park, Welwyn, the first week-end in August. All the advisers have given their provisional consent to attend the school. One of them will take out a working party. Another criticise member's films. Another will bring down a film he has made and give a talk on it.

So many members have intimated their intention of being present that the Association would like to make its final arrangements for accommodation as soon as possible. A limited number of non-members will be accepted (on payment of a small supplementary fee), but application must be made immediately.



"WE SPECIALISE IN MOTION PICTURE APPARATUS!" .

SEND FOR FULL PARTICULARS OF THE CINÉ KODAK "EIGHT"

THE MOST ECONOMICAL WAY TO MAKE MOVING PICTURES

LET US SEND YOU DETAILS OF THE SEIMENS PROJECTORS

G. & J. GLASGOW

39 CAUSEYSIDE STREET PAISLEY

PHONE 4033

POST ANYWHERE

STUDIOS CENTRALLY SITUATED

MAKE YOUR FILM UNDER THE MOST **FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS**

THE STUDIOS equipped with the latest Recording and Lighting Plant.

Free use of Silent-Blimped-Vinten-Camera on Truck available for Locations together with all types of Lighting-Equipment. Terms by the Week, Day or Evening.

Write for Descriptive Leaflet to The Secretary

"Q" FILM STUDIOS, LIMITED 245 Marlebone Road, N.W.1.

THREE ESSENTIALS OF GOOD FILM - MAKING

are, first, a completely steady camera; second, a few special "effects"; and finally, accurate and correct editing. In the Kenburn range of accessories there are devices specially designed to bring these things within the reach of every cine worker. These accessories are designed with the definite purpose of eliminating the handicaps of sub-standard work and providing the amateur with means to rival the professional

professional.
For example:—

• A STEADY CAMERA is ensured under all possible conditions by the use of the "Pockipod." Remarkable device, gives practically the results of the best tripod, yet weights only \(\frac{1}{2} \) lb. and has none of the drawbacks of the tripod. Costs only 35s., beautifully finished in chromium and oxydised bronze. May we send you full details?

• SPECIAL "EFFECTS" are easy to produce with reversed motion, which makes possible all sorts of trick work. We have some descriptive matter which explains how reversed motion can produce many kinds of illusions and effects, and gives details of our Reversed Motion Cradle. May we send you a copy?

• ACCURATE EDITING and film assembly is only possible with the right accessories. Our "Kenboard" equipment brings professional methods to the help of the sub-standard worker, at a cost of only 40s. An indispensable part of the outfit of every keen cinematographer.

KENBURN INSTRUMENT CO. 4a Hill Road, Wimbledon, LONDON, S.W.19

_USE__

THE "SEESTU" 9/5mm SUPER FILM SERVICE!

Every Film Guaranteed Perfect

All the Latest Releases to be had first from us. Rates 1/- per reel per day

COMPLETE LIST OF RATES SENT FREE

The 'SEESTU' is the finest Film Library in Scotland

DON'T FORGET THE ADDRESS

G. & J. GLASGOW

39 CAUSEYSIDE STREET

PHONE 4033 PAISLEY POST FREE

· CINEMA ·

FILM WRITING FORMS. Six Methods of Preparing a story for the Screen. With an introduction and notes by Lewis Jacobs. N.Y. 1934. 1.00 postpaid.

Agents for: EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA: FILM ART: CINEMA QUARTERLY.
List of Film books on request.

● MODERN AUTHORS ●

Headquarters for Experimental Literature James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound and others.

TRANSITION No. 23 about ready.

Modern First and Limited Editions, Private Presses and Association Items.

Books about the Theatre: Drama, Costumes, Stage-setting and Design.

Catalogues on request

GOTHAM BOOK MART

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

2d. per word, prepaid

THE REGENT LITERARY SERVICE

Cambridge Graduate (B.A. Hons. English Literature) will correct MSS. and prepare scenarios for production. Literary revision of all kinds expertly dealt with. Typing and translations undertaken.

12 REGENT STREET, S.W.1.

Telephone Whitehall 2265

FILM BOOKS WANTED. "Film till Now,"
"Anatomy of Motion Picture Art," and all standard works.

E.F.G., 17 S. St Andrew Street, Edinburgh 2

AUTHORS invited forward MSS. all kinds for prompt publication. Fiction especially invited. Also £50 for Poems.

Particulars free

STOCKWELL LTD., 29 Ludgate Hill, LONDON

ARE you going to the IFMA Summer Production School at Welwyn, first weekend in August? Full particulars from Hon. Secy.,

IFMA, 32 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1.

Under the direction of J. S. Fairfax-Jones.

• THE EVERYMAN

HAMPSTEAD'S NEW INTIMATE REPERTORY CINEMA

Showing acclaimed Masterpieces from all Countries

Send name and address for inclusion in mailing list, Holly Bush Vale, Hampstead, London.

INDEPENDENT FILM-MAKERS

We supply 35 m.m. Super-speed Panchromatic Film at 10/6 per 100 ft. Complete laboratory service, best quality work and moderate prices.

Special Service Department hiring Camera-man, Lighting Equipment and Film Library—everything cinematic.

If you are requiring any 35 or 16 m.m. apparatus, new or second-hand, please send for our lists.

B.S. PRODUCTIONS, 1 Mitre Court, London, EC4

(Telephone: Central 2480)

MEMBERS' FILMS

S. B. CARTER has made some publicity films for the National Farmers' Union Mutual Insurance Society to show farmers the benefits obtainable by taking out an insurance policy. There were three of these films and it was interesting to see how the director's grasp had become firmer with each succeeding film. Although they cannot be said to be completely successful they do give the impression that he will eventually achieve a style of his own, a style which will be all the better for having sprung from him and not from outside. H. Homer has a film taken on two cruising holidays. Here the director had been swept from place to place too quickly to allow of more than a fragmentary impression to be obtained. Witness his handling of the Kiel canal—here he had more time and the result was excellent. His atmosphere shots were particularly good. Some early morning shots of sea across stretches of sand and two or three shots in an Italian village were very lovely. For review in next issue.—L. Broadbent's film of the Channel Isles. H. Compton-Bennet's Down She Goes, a film on tree-felling, and extracts from work in progress: provisional title, Black Daisies. Peter

Le Neve Foster's A Movie Maker in Moscow.

THE IFMA has taken over the scenario service which was run by Cinema Quarterly. There are several scripts available for production by amateurs. Three are by Jay Leyda who is now working for G.I.K. in the U.S.S.R. His film A Bronx Morning has been shown by many of the film societies.

LESLIE BEISIEGEL is at work on several scripts and would be pleased to hear from any member with a view to co-operating.

Dorset Amateur Film Productions is making a publicity film of Weymouth. It will be shot during the summer and is scheduled to finish by October when it will be available on loan. This society is also making a film called Control which deals with the making and control of robots.

WILL anyone possessing a 9.5 mm. printer and willing to co-operate with another member kindly communicate with the Hon. Secretary?

AMATEUR FILMS AT VENICE.

THE Cine Club Venezia has been entrusted to organize an exhibition of sub-standard films for La Bienniale d'Arte at Venice in August. Suitable awards will be made for the best films submitted. Independent Film-makers and other amateurs who have films of an unusual or experimental nature which they would like to enter should communicate immediately with Dr. Francesco Pasinetti, San Polo 2196, Venice, Italy.

259

EXPERIMENT FOR AMATEURS

FILMS TO MUSIC

G. R. CLARK

Towards the close of the silent era, directors were beginning to put considerable store upon the accompaniments to their films. They were no longer content with the patchwork arrangements that local bandsmen turned out from the theatre repertoire, and were coming to realise the importance of a complete score written specially for the picture. A number of commissions went out to accredited composers and Edmund Meisel responded with excellent scores for Potemkin, October and The Blue Express. In Britain, no lesser man than Goossens was responsible for the music for The Constant Nymph, while Reisenfeld in America was giving his attention to spectacles like Ben Hur. For the first time an intelligent liaison was being

created between picture and sound.

With the coming of talking machinery however, directors discarded music and pinned their faith in the spoken word, vaguely believing that speech was a better means of holding attention than the musical scale. But with the inevitable exhaustion accruing from incessant speech, the pendulum is to-day swinging back again and there are signs of returning sanity. Quite recently we have had the commendable efforts of Dr. Becce in the Riefenstahl pictures and in the exciting Ufa short, Steel. White Smoke is particularly interesting for the telling use of leit-motif. The score is built round a short phrase—the love theme—played at the outset by horns. This is developed as the film progresses together with secondary subjects. Towards the end the orchestral texture becomes more and more involved, coincident with the image, and in the final working out, when the orchestra bursts into a joyful dance measure, an added intensity is given to the visual climax.

It may be argued that this is not a very original use of sound, nor that it breaks any new ice so far as sound and picture is concerned. Nevertheless it is important in that it endeavours to effect a definite unity between the visual and the aural. It tries to link a sequence of events together, not by their associable sounds, but by a musical substance possessing an individual quality apart from the picture. It gives a double image and an added point to the argument of the picture, though it is worked out according to its particular canons. It is possible to visualise a future cinema in which the

director is no longer a snipper of celluloid, but a composer who develops his script concurrently with his score, and conceives his film, not as a series of images alone, but with a complementary counterpoint of sound. This sound may not be music alone. It may be the crash of machinery, the battering of pneumatic drills, the howl of the wind, or the cry of a new-born child. It may in fact be any of the myriad sounds that are part and parcel of our daily life. The vocabulary of music itself may be expanded and instruments made to produce visual notes far removed from concert practice. But the director-composer will have to exercise his power of selecting angle, distance and composition in the same way as he did pictorially. He may orchestrate his final sound band with completely synthetic tone by means of distortion, dissolving and superimposition of note upon note.

It is in this direction that the amateur may experiment. The arrival of sound probably dissuaded him from any attempts at synchronisation, and until the cost of sound recording comes within practical limit, he has no doubt regarded silent films as his only means of expression. But there exists a vast field of recorded music for him to explore, from which he can extract material for the synchronisation of his pictures, the only outlay being the cost of the records. And besides music there are effects records from which can be built up extremely interesting accompaniments. And to-day it is possible to have re-recorded any particular parts of records that are chosen, so that the complete accompaniment to a reel may be

contained on one disc.

And for those that are musically minded there is great scope for writing original scores for their films. It is nearly always possible to find two or three people at least who are capable of playing an instrument of some description, and the music for the complete film can be recorded at small cost. In this way a doubly interesting form of expression exists. But whatever the amateur may do, he is safe in the knowledge that he is not denied experiment, and in this direction his scope is wider than that of the greatest commercial studio.

● IFMA THE INDEPENDENT FILM-MAKERS ASSOCIATION

For all serious workers interested in the production of Documentary, Experimental or Educational Films.

Advisers: Anthony Asquith, Andrew Buchanan, John Grierson, Alan Harper, Stuart Legg, Paul Rotha, Basil Wright.

Write for a Prospectus.

Hon. Sec., G. A. SHAW, 32 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1

RUSSIAN CLASSICS ON 16 MM

Ad

INITIATED last December as a section of the Workers' Theatre Movement, KINO commenced operations by securing the substandard rights for all Soviet Films, and proceeded to issue Potemkin on 16 mm, non-flam stock. This was hired out to local organizations, to be shown in unlicensed halls and was such a success that it paid for itself in two months. In February The General Line was

issued and shown in a similar way throughout Britain.

As was to be expected, in view of its not having a Board of Censors' Certificate, there has been a great deal of trouble from the authorities whenever a show of Potemkin has come to their knowledge. There is, of course, no law to stop the showing of nonflam films in premises not licensed for cinematograph performances, but the L.C.C. (or other Council), together with the Police, often succeed in getting hall proprietors to cancel the bookings. This, although it may cause considerable inconvenience, worry and extra expense to the organisers, rarely has the desired result of preventing anyone from seeing the film. In almost every case, the show has been given either on the same day or else a few days later generally to a greatly enlarged audience, the extra numbers being due to the free publicity given by the authorities.

For next season it is hoped to have twelve or fourteen films available, including some of KINO'S own shorts. Among these will possibly be: -October, Storm over Asia, Mother, St. Petersburg, Deserter, Enthusiasm, Earth, Turksib, The Blue Express, Ivan, Golden Mountains, Komsomol, Ghost that Never Returns, and The Road to Life.

Enquiries should be addressed to KINO, 33 Ormond Yard,

London, W.C.1.

NEW PROJECTOR

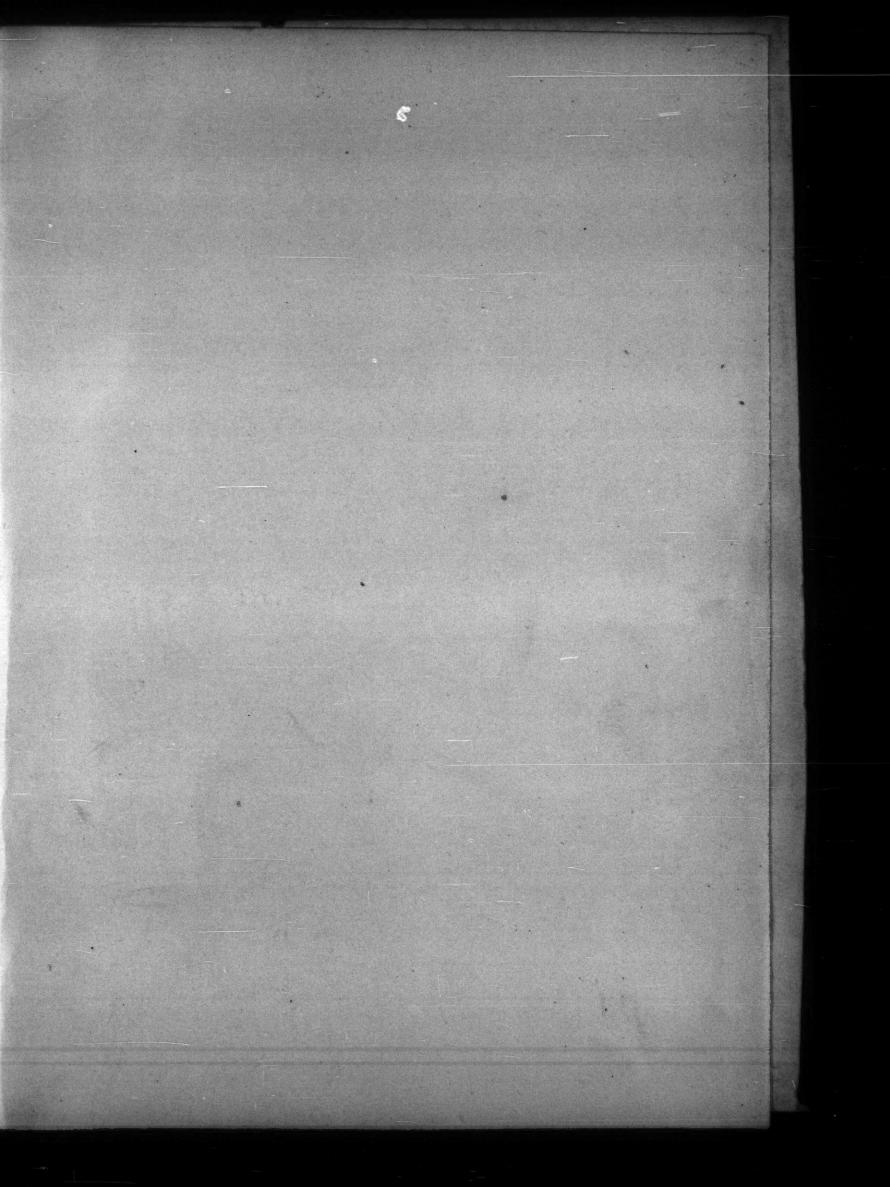
A NEW sound-on-film projector using 17.5 mm. film has been marketed by Pathescope. The film has one row of perforations and one perforation per frame. The additional 1.5 mm. over 16 mm. allows the sound track to be the same size as on standard film and still provides a larger picture area. The same lamp is used both for projection and illumination of the sound track. Power is obtainable from any ordinary lamp socket on A.C. mains with a consumption as low as 21 amps. A special shutter gives flickerless projection of pictures up to 10 feet wide.

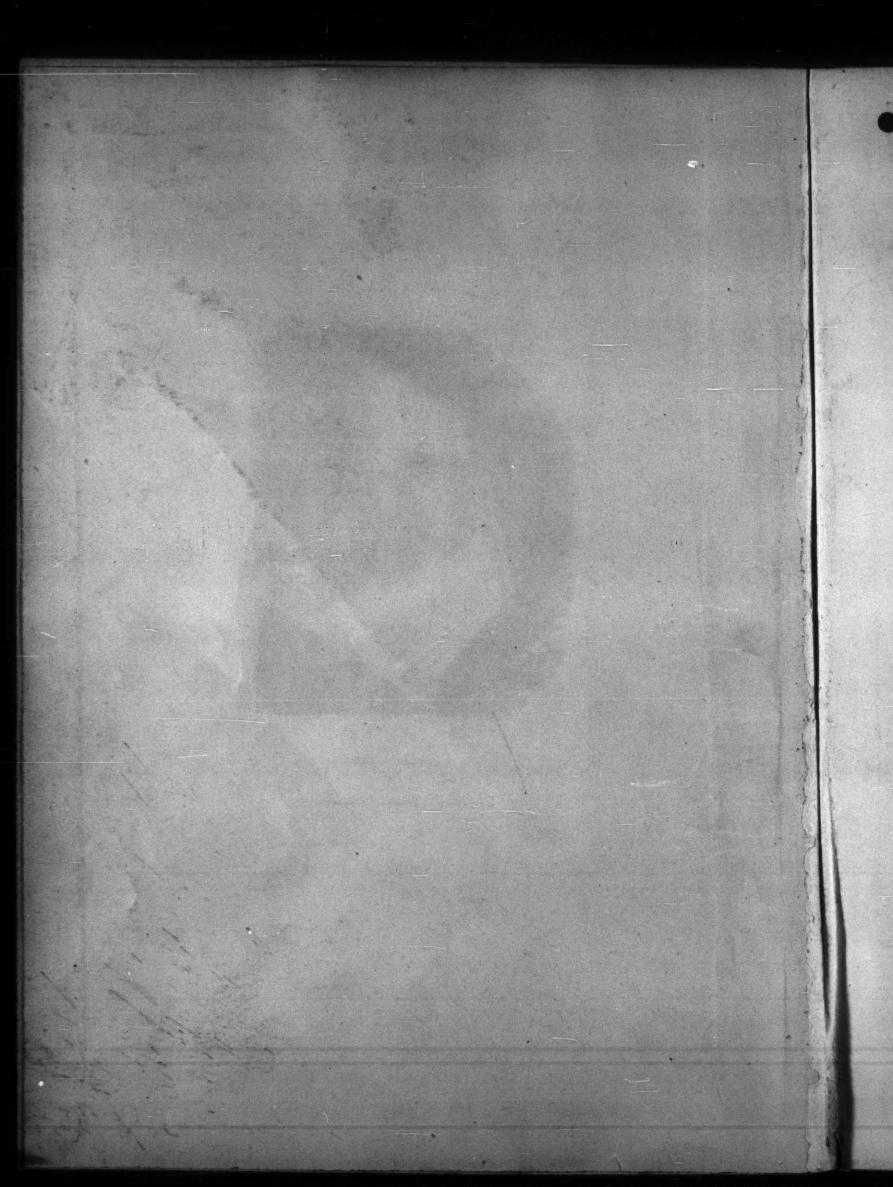
INDEX TO VOLUME 2

Activity in Belgium. Ludo Patris	233	Fact or Fiction? Forsyth Hardy . 179	9
Adaptation: An Example.		Film Abroad . 26, 101, 169, 23	3
Clifford Leech	30	Film and Radio. Rudolf Arnheim 82	4
Anna und Elisabeth	189	Filming in Ceylon. Basil Wright . 23	Ī
Arnheim, Rudolf		Film in South Africa	
Film and Radio	84	H. R. van der Poel 10.	4
Germany on the Screen	169	Film on Paper. Stuart Legg . 13	500/2009/20
Art and Reproduction. G. F. Dalton	173	Films of the Quarter 37, 112, 179, 24	0
Art of Walt Disney	1/3	Film Societies . 50, 126, 191, 25	4
Mack W. Schwab	150	Films to Music. G. R. Clark . 26	
Widek W. Schwab	150		
Balcon, Michael		Footlight Parade	Stand SE28300
Function of the Producer .	-	Four Frightened People 19	Ю
n	5	French Movie To-day	•
Bitter Sweet	253		6
	48		en-
Black Magic	253	Berthold Viertel 20	06
Blood Money	249	Function of the Director	
Brown, Jenny. Rugged Island.	177	Paul Rotha 7	78
Buchanan, Andrew.		Function of the Producer	
Choosing a Subject	195	Michael Balcon, John Grierson	5
Catherine the Great	186	Germany on the Screen	•
Cavalcanti, Alberto	100		
	-66		9
Ethics for Movie	166		90
Choosing a Subject			15
Andrew Buchanan	195	Grierson, John	
Cinematic Colour		Function of the Producer .	5
Mack W. Schwab	237	G.P.O. Gets Sound 21	15
Camera Turns on History		Pudovkin on Sound 10	06
Philip Lindsay	10	Symphonic Film	55
Clark, G. R. Films to Music .	260	Hardy, Forsyth	J J
Clouds and Rain	198		
Colour Of It. Pennethorne Hughes	16	Films of the Quarter 37, 112, 179, 24	40
Commercial Documentary	••	Hitchcock, Alfred	0-
TT D. IAT. 1C.	96	Interviewed by Stephen Watts.	80
		House of Rothschild	43
Contact	47		16
Crainquebille	253		64
Crime on the Hill	253	Hunted People	22
Dalton, G. F.		Independent Film-Maker	
A-4 I D I	170	61, 129, 194, 2	56
Poet and the Film	173	International Film	J-
	33		12
Thoughts on Montage	238	Invisible Man	
Decent Documents. Forsyth Hardy		1	90
Death takes a Holiday	253		53
Deserter	116		40
Design for Living	188	Jones, C. R.	
Documentary (3). John Grierson.	155	Stage People and Film Things . 2	22
Duck Soup	189		
			61
Elliott, Eric. Whither Colour? .	161		
"Embfu."			27
Working Plan for Sub-Standard	19		87
Emperor Jones	253	Leech, Clifford	
Ethics for Movie			30
Alberto Cavalcanti, Stuart Legg	166		66
Everywoman's Man	190		131
	3		

INDEX —continued

Leibelei	190	Schwab, Mack W.	
Lindsay, Philip		Art of Walt Disney	150
Camera Turns on History	10	Cinematic Colour	327
		Screen Magazines. D. F. Taylor .	93
MacDiarmid, Hugh		Simms, Thomas.	33
	146		III
Mala the Magnificent	187	Song of Songs	44
Man of Aran	245		24
	190	Soviet Writer Takes To Cinema	-4
Materialle	118	41 1 747 1	
			101
	123	Spectator	
Mickey's Gala Premiere	49	Norman Wilson . 2, 75, 143, 5	
Miscellany . 30, 106, 173,	237	Spring on the Farm	49
	190	Stage People and Film Things	
Music in Films. Alfred Hitchcock.	80		222
No L. Pri L.		Stranger's Return	48
	190	Symphonic Film. John Grierson .	155
No More Film Plays!		Synthetic America	
Eric M. Knight	61	Eric M. Knight	87
0.1	c		•
	246	Taylor, D. F.	
	190		-6
Outer Isles	198	French Movie To-day	26
Oxford University Film Society .	50	Screen Magazines	93
		Thoughts on Montage	
Patris, Ludo. Activity in Belgium .	233		238
	253		182
	190	Tugboat Annie	47
Poel, H. R. van der	3	Twentieth Century	254
	104	Twenty-Six Commisars	48
Poet and the Film	104		
	00	Unfinished Symphony	254
G. F. Dalton, Herbert Read .	33	Organismen sympnomy	-34
Poetry and Film		Viertel, Berthold	
	146		206
Poil de Carotte	121	771 77117 4	
Private Life of Henry VIII	39	Viva Villa!	250
Production Methods in Soviet Russia			
Helen Schoeni	210	Wandering Jew	125
Pudovkin on Sound. John Grierson	106	Watts, Stephen	
		Alexander Korda (Interviewed)	12
Queen Christina	185	Alfred Hitchcock (Interviewed)	80
	3	Werth, Alexander	
Rampant Reformers.		Soviet Writer Takes To Cinema	101
	227	We Turn To History	
Read, Herbert. Poet and the Film		Thomas Simms	111
Rebel	35	Whither Colour? Eric Elliott	161
	46		
Road to Hell	67	Whither Germany?	188
Roadwards	64	Wilson, Norman	
Rotha, Paul		Spectator 2, 75, 143,	203
Function of the Director .	78	Wings Over Everest	252
Rugged Island. Jenny Brown .	177	Woolfe, H. Bruce	
	1	Commercial Documentary .	96
Scarlet Empress	251	Working Plan for Sub-Standard .	19
Schoeni, Helen		Wright, Basil. Filming in Ceylon .	231
Production Methods in Soviet .			3
Russia	210	Zoo in Budapest	45
			TJ





Edited by—
NORMAN WILSON
Review Editor— FORSYTH HARDY
London Correspondent— PAUL ROTHA
Associate Correspondents— D. F. TAYLOR
J. S. FAIRFAX-JONES
U.S.A.—
ERIC M. KNIGHT MACK W. SCHWAB
France—
ALEXANDER WERTH
Holland— J. HULSKER
Italy— P. M. PASINETTI
Belgium—
LUDO PATRIS
Czechoslovakia—
KAREL SANTAR
Hungary— F. R. ORBAN
India—
R. K. RELE
South Africa— H. R. VAN DER POEL
Australia— LEON S. STONE
Ireland-
G. F. DALTON
SHINKO MIZUNO
And correspondents in Russia,
Germany and Scandinavia.

SUBSCRIPTION—
Great Britain, 4s. 6d.
Abroad, 7s. 6d.
Post free for one year.

All business communications and subscriptions should be addressed to the Manager, G. D. ROBINSON

CINEMA QUARTERLY

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	3
EVASIVE DOCUMENTARY. David Schrire: John Grierson replies	7
ITALY'S "INTERNATIONAL" INSTITUTE G. F. Noxon	2
66 FILMS IN A LIDO HOTEL. P.M. Pasinetti 1	4
EXPERIMENTS IN COUNTERPOINT. Herbert Read 1	7
THE FUNCTION OF THE CAMERA-MAN Curt Courant—Ernest Dyer 2	2
WAGNER AND FILM. Dallas Bower 2	7
FILMS IN PARIS. Alexander Werth 3	0
NEW ABSTRACT PROCESS. Claire Parker— A. Alexeieff	4
BRUCE WOOLFE, ROTHA, AND "RISING TIDE" John Grierson	7
FILMS OF THE QUARTER. Forsyth Hardy, John Grierson, Paul Rotha, D. F. Taylor, Norman Wilson	9
FILM SOCIETIES	5
THE INDEPENDENT FILM-MAKER 5	9
 Editorial and Publishing Offices: 24 N.W. THISTLE ST. LANE, EDINBURGH, 'Phone: 20425 Telegrams: Tricolour, Edinburg 	2 1h
 London Advertising Agents: GREGORY & McCARTHY, 32 Shaftesbury Ave., W. 'Phone: Gerrard 6456 	.1
DISTRIBUTORS ABROAD: New York, Gotham Book Mar 51 W. 47th Street. Hollywood, Stanley Rose Book Sho 1625 N. Vine Street. Paris, Au Pont de l'Europe, 17 ru Vignon. Melbourne, Leonardo Art Shop, 166 Little Collin	p, le

LONDON FILMS

NOW IN PRODUCTION

SANDERS OF THE RIVER
WHITHER MANKIND?

THE REIGN OF
KING GEORGE V